

THESIS APPROVAL FORM
NAZARBAYEV UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

THE IMPACT OF WESTERN EDUCATION ON THE SOCIOPOLITICAL VALUES OF
YOUNG ADULTS IN KAZAKHSTAN

БАТЫС ҮЛГІСІНДЕГІ БІЛІМ БЕРУДІҢ ҚАЗАҚСТАН ЖАСТАРЫНЫҢ САЯСИ-
ӘЛЕУМЕТТІК ҚҰНДЫЛЫҚТАРЫНА ТІГІЗЕР ӘСЕРІ

ВЛИЯНИЕ ЗАПАДНОГО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ НА СОЦИОПОЛИТИЧЕСКИЕ
ЦЕННОСТИ МОЛОДЕЖИ КАЗАХСТАНА

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A Thesis Submitted to the School of Humanities and Social Sciences of Nazarbayev
University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF ARTS IN POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

ASTANA, KAZAKHSTAN

2017

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables	v
List of Figures	vi
Abstract	vii
Acknowledgments.....	ix
 Introduction.....	 1
Modernization in an Authoritarian State	1
Literature Review: Modernization, Education and Democratization	7
Theoretical Framework: Western Education and Change in Values	18
Hypotheses	23
Alternative Explanations	25
Exploring Values of Astana’s University Students	26
Western, Non-Western and Hybrid Education in Astana	26
Targeted Sample: 755 Astana-based University Students	29
Recruitment and Ethical Issues	31
Measurements and Coding of Dependent, Independent and Control Variables	33
Dependent Variable: Self-Expression Value.....	33
Independent and Control Variables: Duration, Type, and Content of Education, Media and Travelling	35
Statistical Analyses of Hypotheses 1 and 2	38
The Effect of Years of Education.....	38
The Effect of Social Sciences.....	42
Examining Values of Graduates of Western Universities	46
Population and Ethical Considerations	46
Sample: 11 Graduates.....	47
Internal and External Sources of Self-expression Values	48
Conclusion: State-led Modernization through Western Education	59
Appendix.....	64
Survey Questions.....	64
Interview Questions.....	67
Reference	69

List of Tables

Table 1. Selected University Departments.....	30
Table 2. The Sample Grouped According to Universities and Departments.....	31
Table 3. Coding of the Six Indicators Constructed from the Survey Questions.....	34
Table 4. Coding of the Independent Variable Constructed from the Survey Questions.....	36
Table 5. Coding of the Control Variables Constructed from the Survey Questions.....	37
Table 6. OLS Regression with Years of Education as the Main Independent Variable.....	39
Table 7. OLS Regression with Social Science and Engineering as the Main Independent Variables.....	44
Table 8. Major and Countries of Interview Participants.....	47
Table 9. Descriptive Statistics	68

List of Figures

Figure 1 Gender Balance of the Sample Collected.....	31
Figure 2 Variation in Dependent Variable - Value.....	35
Figure 3 Expected Value. The Relationship between the Years of Education and Self- Expression Values for Western University Students	41

Abstract

How does a type of education influence the development of particular norms and beliefs within a society? My thesis is aimed at finding the impact of Western-oriented education on sociopolitical values of young people in Kazakhstan. I use revisited modernization theory by Inglehart and Welzel (2005) and argue that students studying in Western universities possess more self-expression values such as prioritizing freedom and autonomous decision-making compared to students who attend non-Western universities. In particular, I propose three hypotheses: two of them are focused on the influence of additional years of education and content of courses on the development of self-expression values. The last one claims that studying in a Western democratic country increases the exposure to self-expression values experienced by a foreign student.

To test my hypotheses, I designed and conducted an original survey on university students in Kazakhstan. Besides, I conducted series of interviews on those who received higher education in the West. Using data from my survey, I found that self-expression values evolve with additional years spent in a Western-oriented institution. However, surprisingly, I found little evidence that the content of courses, those in social science, in particular, promotes the development of self-expression values. Qualitative evidence from my interviews with those who received higher education in Western democratic countries also supports this statistical finding. Furthermore, qualitative data suggests that when students spend their formative years in a Western democratic country, they would be more exposed to values as individualism, tolerance, trust and freedom of expression both within the university walls and outside of the campus. Moreover, the interview responses reveal that self-expression values are present in graduates, but political constraints imposed by the current regime of Kazakhstan limit their potential. Therefore, people, who have experience studying in a Western democratic country, would like to establish more accountable and transparent

government, and inform the society about their basic rights. This conclusion can have two different implications. The first one is positive, and suggests that benefits of academic freedom can inspire the government to seize control over other Kazakhstani universities. On the other hand, it is possible that growing number of young people possessing self-expression values can threaten autocratic elites, so they might decide to stop providing this public good.

Acknowledgments

First of all, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my thesis advisor Dr. Charles J. Sullivan. Without his immense help, constant guidance and hard work this research would have never been realized. Dr. Sullivan's expertise was invaluable at every stage of my project: starting from choosing a research topic ending up with writing a conclusion. Thank you, Professor, for teaching us to be persuasive and persistent in our work.

Moreover, I feel deeply indebted to Dr. Yoshiharu Kobayashi for his continuous support and help in conducting statistical analysis for this study. Dr. Kobayashi and his advice encouraged me to keep on working even if I did not possess enough skills to complete such a difficult exercise. Thank you very much, Professor Kobayashi, for sharing with me your knowledge and creative ideas.

I would also like to thank Dr. Trochev for being very responsive and sympathetic program coordinator with a good sense of humor.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my parents and my younger brother for their love and psychological support during this two-year long challenge. Also, I have to thank my groupmates for being brilliant friends and neighbors.

Introduction

There is a lasting debate in political science concerning the plausibility of modernization theory. The simplest form of the theory suggests that economic development increases the chances of democratization of a country. This proposition was rejected and re-emerged gaining new shape and explanatory power. A recent theory suggests that modernization and subsequent democratization occurs through gradual changes in the values of members of a society. This research project aims at testing the plausibility of this “modernization through cultural shift” (Inglehart and Welzel 2005) hypothesis against the single case study of Kazakhstan. According to this theory, genuine democracy is one where elites respect human rights and face constant constraints from society. When a country’s wealth increases, so do abundant material resources and levels of knowledge and skills. People are better equipped to participate in public politics, therefore, the probability of a gradual democratic shift substantially increases (Welzel and Inglehart 2008,126). Thus, the theory contends that the advantages of economic development can produce a strong and articulate society that can demand an open, accountable, and transparent political regime. Moreover, this study is focused on the following question: *How does a type of education influence the development of particular norms and beliefs within a society?*

Modernization in an Authoritarian State

The term “modernization” is also a fad that is used even by the most authoritarian leaders in their speeches. To be more precise, all of the recent addresses of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan contain messages about the necessity of making an effort to undertake a “third modernization”, which should be focused on integrating latest advancements in science and technology into all spheres of the national economy (The President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev’s Address to the Nation of Kazakhstan. January 31, 2017). Furthermore, the given concept is present in the strategies underlying the

main course of the development of this Central Asian state. In particular, the long-term plans similar to “Kazakhstan - 2030”, “Kazakhstan - 2050” (Kudaibergenova 2015, 440), and the latest “100 Concrete Steps” deliver ideas about the importance of the modernization of the business sector, industry, agriculture and civil service (KazInform 2015). Even though the mentioned public projects have different names, they are all designed to pursue the same set of goals: diversification of the economy, strengthening entrepreneurship through the support of small and medium business, attraction of FDI, along with reducing social problems such as unemployment and poverty. Moreover, they all talk about the significance of a transparent and more accountable government (Weitz 2013).

These goals are far-reaching and seem to have a noble purpose. However, there are still doubts whether this largely “economic modernization” initiated by the government can lead to “political modernization”. In particular, will it increase the possibilities that a country will transform its political regime?

I classify Kazakhstan as an authoritarian state. If we refer to the classification of non-democratic regimes by Linz, we notice that Kazakhstan falls into the category of “limited authoritarianism” due to the fact that political power is largely concentrated in hands of the leader and an inner circle and only a nominal opposition in the form of weak political parties is permitted (Linz 2000, 159). Most of the political science literature on Kazakhstan describes its regime as “neopatrimonial”. The term implies the prevalence of blood ties and loyalty to an autocrat over competence and professionalism in his decision to appoint a person to high-level official positions (Peyrouse 2012, 347). Indeed, since the independence of the country, we can see that the President’s daughters, son-in-laws, and closest allies occupy the most influential positions in the branches of government along with the top posts of the wealthiest corporations. To illustrate, one can easily recall the recent appointment of the leader’s eldest daughter Dariga Nazarbayeva as Deputy Prime Minister (Reuters).

Scholars often argue that a heavy reliance on rents from mineral resources enables those in power to sustain this patrimonial regime (Peyrouse 2012, 347). In fact, this Central Asian state is famous for rich oil, gas, uranium, copper and coal reserves (Aliev 2015, 5-9). Privatization and the free market economy that was adopted at the early stages of independence enriched the President and his family, along with several technocratic elites and allowed them to sustain this political regime based on informal ties (Peyrouse 2012, 357-358). Nevertheless, the current development strategies mentioned above (“100 Concrete Steps”, “Kazakhstan – 2050”) aspire to shift from a natural resources based economy to a more service-oriented one (Sullivan 2017, 2). If we refer to modernization theory, this type of development breeds long-term benefits and empowers ordinary people (Lipset 1959, 83). However, there are still challenges in the state’s attempt to undertake substantial changes in economic policies. The lack of competent people, few incentives to move from hydrocarbons to green energy, and a serious shortage of the latest equipment are obstacles standing in the way of the diversification of the national economic sector (Weitz 2013). Moreover, it remains bleak whether influential elites will cordially support such policies if reality shows that corruption is still pervasive (Sullivan 2017, 3).

Kazakhstan, compared to neighboring Kyrgyzstan, remains relatively stable with one President ruling the country for over 25 years. However, Nursultan Nazarbayev’s dominance was not always unquestionable. The early 2000s with its privatization boom allowed knowledgeable business elites to accumulate wealth and occupy positions in the government. Although extremely prosperous, elites of the “outer” circle remained highly insecure as they expected their assets to be taken by the ruler by legal or illegal means (Junisbai and Junisbai 2005, 374). Therefore, this constant fear of losing wealth and status made them form a legal opposition (Democratic Choice of Kazakhstan - DCK) that seriously threatened the power of the ruling elites. The DCK condemned the President and people loyal to him and advocated

for democratic changes. According to Junisbai and Junisbai (2005), the modernization of the Kazakhstani economy created “intraelite cleavages” capable of containing unlimited Presidential power. The goals of the DCK leaders were certainly personal; however, their means were largely democratic. Unfortunately, the party was liquidated prior to official elections and the leaders of the party were eliminated (Junisbai and Junisbai 2005, 378-381). Since then the President employs a single dominant party “Nur-Otan” to prevent elite fractionalization, ensure mass support through formal networks and increase the strength of the ruling faction by incorporating low-level officials (*Akims*) into the political party (Isaacs 2013, 1071-1074). In this case, the authoritarian leader seems to utilize the benefits of economic modernization not for democratic purposes but to further enhance his regime (Bueno de Mesquita and Downs 2005, 78).

It seems hard to oppose the government or introduce changes through means of formal institutions. But what about informal ones? A strong and articulate civil society is a major component of gradual democratization described by modernization theorists (Inglehart and Welzel 2009, 36). Likewise, the rhetoric of “100 Steps” contains clear statements concerning the necessity of “increasing the quality of human capital” through improvements in an education system (Rustem 2015). Education is an instrument that can foster a certain set of values in the individual and empower a person to act and demand changes within a political system. This can occur through the socialization of a student into an environment where personal freedoms and rights are respected, and individual opinions are heard and encouraged (Gift and Krcmaric 2015, 5). Moreover, a high-quality education helps to nurture future intellectuals – elites that will impose liberal changes through reforms, legislations and other official channels (Hannum and Buchmann 2005, 346-347). To develop its educated class the government launched the “Bolashak” program, which sends the most talented youth abroad, and recently opened Nazarbayev University, where foreign professors are aimed at

nurturing critical and analytical thinking in the minds of the young adults of Kazakhstan (Sullivan 2017, 5-6). These endeavors received both criticism and approval among the local population. In particular, there was skepticism among people whether it is worthwhile to support such a costly government project (Radio Azattyq). On the other hand, the former president of “Bolashak”, Saysat Nurbek, contends that Western-style education granted by this program and Nazarbayev University endows individuals with the most important things - *values*: “preference of meritocracy, rejection of kinship, and respect for property rights”. Mr. Nurbek believes that the graduates of these institutions will gradually incorporate the mentioned norms into their working culture and produce substantial changes in the political system and business environment (Sholk 2015).

With this in mind, this research project is aimed at investigating whether the benefits of a state-initiated modernization have any impact on the society of Kazakhstan. In particular, it investigates whether changes are happening at the individual level through a gradual shift in the values of Western university students towards a more liberal dimension. The main argument states that as time passes a Western-oriented education fosters the development of self-expression norms in the recipients by formal (courses taken) and informal means (the overall academic environment emphasizing the importance of individualism) and induces them to prioritize more liberal goals and aspirations.

The subsequent chapters are constructed as follows: my literature review highlights the existing debate concerning modernization theory. Moreover, it will focus on scholarly articles examining the influence of education on democratization. Chapter III elucidates the theory of democracy through human empowerment, as well as the ways in which a Western-oriented education might change an individual’s beliefs. This part of the research also contains a discussion of my hypotheses to be tested along with rival explanations regarding the changes in values. Next, I will focus on the survey research and talk more about three

cases that I selected. I used both survey and interviews to find statistical as well as qualitative evidence in favor of a change in the value systems of the recipients of Western education. This section is also focuses on the sample size and ethical issues. Then, I will elucidate definition, measurements, and coding of main variables that are used in core statistical analyses. Chapter VI is dedicated to the data analysis and interpretation of my results. Chapter VII introduces the interview data and analysis. The last chapter presents a discussion of the findings and the conclusion of the whole project.

Literature Review: Modernization, Education and Democratization

Any social science research rests on the careful examination of the previous academic works dedicated to the issues under study. Therefore, it is crucial to address the views of scholars on the topics of modernization and democratization, as well as the definitions necessary to conceptualize major variables used in this research. The literature on regime change in general, and democratization in particular can be divided into two large camps: “structuralist” and “institutionalist” schools of thought. The former approach is called “modernization theory” and takes root from the early 1950s in the widely-discussed work of sociologist Lipset (1959). The aim of the article is to find out a set of social institutions that can serve as underlying reasons driving a state towards a democratic system of governance. The author holds that the level of economic development of a state impacts the likelihood for its democratization (Lipset 1959, 75). The major requisites of democracy that could probably assist in predicting a transition to a more liberal form of government are wealth, education, urbanization, and industrialization, coupled with the legitimacy and effectiveness of a political system as well as the existence of social groups and associations in the given state (Lipset 1959, 80). Lipset considers that mentioned variables could affect the views and values of representatives of varying social classes and bring them towards the path of acceptance and tolerance, which would eventually reduce conflicts of interests within society and grant people more peaceful and legitimate expressions of their rights and freedoms, in other words, democracy (Lipset 1959, 83).

This foundational work was widely debated and opposed within academia. An analysis developed by Przeworski and Limongi (1997) finds almost no statistical evidence in favor of modernization theory and rejects the classic theoretical argument by Lipset (Przeworski and Limongi 1997, 177). The authors introduce new terminology by differentiating between “endogenous” and “exogenous” democratization. While the former

concept refers to changes in the regime type due to some internal (structural) changes as improvement in the economic situation of the country, the latter is used when democratization occurs due to sudden outside factor (war, intervention, etc.) (Przeworski and Limongi 1997, 157). Overall, the authors conclude that economic development does not necessarily lead to democracy. Instead, political actors may or may not decide to establish democratic government regardless of the level of development (Przeworski and Limongi 1997, 177).

In contrast, Boix and Stokes (2003) refute the findings of the previous authors and present the statistical results supporting both “endogenous” and “exogenous” democratization (Boix and Stokes 2003, 520-521). By criticizing the methodology and selection of cases used by Przeworski and Limongi, the authors presented an analysis favoring “endogenous” democratization by extending their sample size and introducing new control variables. The robustness checks of previous results by Boix and Stokes shows a new threshold of income for liberalization, as well as suggests new variables (“immobility of state resources” and international influence) that obscure results (Boix and Stokes 2003, 522-535). Moreover, the authors add that controlling for a type of economy (agrarian or industrial) and the level of socioeconomic inequality reveals that industrialization and equal distribution of wealth positively impact endogenous democratization and prevent backsliding to authoritarianism (Boix and Stokes 2003, 544).

Opponents of modernization theory often cite the case of Imperial Germany as an example of a state that experienced substantive economic growth but failed to democratize (Berman 2001, 432). To address this issue Berman analyzes the institutional and social development of XIX century Germany and offers a completely fresh perspective to this widely established view. She argues that the country had such traits of modernization as “enlarging middle class” and a more educated population able to create a civil society that

could limit a state control (Berman 2001, 445). This “moderate form of democratization” was impeded to gain power due to: a) an outside shock - WWI and 2) the absence of a leader interested in the political development of the state (Berman 2001, 437-459). Likewise, Ross (2001) conducted a quantitative analysis that explains why extremely rich countries do not experience the processes described by modernization theory advocates. He empirically tests the “natural resource curse” hypothesis for generalizability along “geographic” and “sectoral” dimensions (Ross 2001, 326-327). In particular, he demonstrated that oil does hinder democratization and this relationship is even harder for small oil-exporting poor countries. More importantly, his analysis shows: “natural resource curse” is relevant for other minerals (gold, silver, diamonds and etc.) and the effect is generalizable across regions relying on revenues from mineral resources (Ross 2001, 340-346). The author suggests that natural resource revenues can be exploited to buy political support (“rentier” effect), to impede the evolution of skilled labor (“modernization” effect), as well as to build a strong military capable of suppressing any attempts to rise against the government (“spending” effect) (Ross 2001, 347-356).

In his essay, Sullivan (2017) discusses the possibilities for an authoritarian state as Kazakhstan to experience modernization, which might lead to subsequent political changes in future. The author gives a comprehensive analysis of the major institutional changes outlined in “100 steps”, a “state-sponsored” attempt to modernize the Kazakhstani economic and political situation by: 1) diversifying the national economy; 2) building a strong and articulate civil society; 3) enhancing the rule of law; 4) creating a civil service based on merit; and 5) strengthening the accountability of the government (Sullivan 2017, 2). However, currently the country has some serious obstacles that might impede the realization of the plan. The author names corruption, a reliance on oil and gas, a weak rule of law, as well as the absence of a robust civil society as barriers towards development (Sullivan 2017, 3-4). Sullivan

argues that the project's success is contingent on the degree of ordinary citizens' participation in politics and the quality of human capital. He holds that a strong legislature coupled with a politically active civil society, and elites interested in supporting democratic reforms would permit economic modernization and political development (Sullivan 2017, 7-8).

The feature of civil society in post-communist Central Asia was described by Ziegler (2010) through the example of Kazakhstan. The author supports the idea that civil society is a crucial element necessary for the consolidation of immature democracies (Ziegler 2010, 798). However, he opposes a narrow view that civil society can be only "confrontational", in other words, opposing and heavily criticizing the official government. Ziegler argues that Kazakhstan along with other Central Asian states possesses this element of a healthy democracy, but the character of Central Asian civil society is in stark contrast with the Western understanding of the concept. The civil society in this region is described as "cooperative" and supportive of the regime in power. This "broad" definition of the concept implies that a state closely controls the activities of social groups, and has a power in deciding which groups to co-opt and which ones to punish (Ziegler 2010, 799). The situation is true to Central Asia due to the pervasiveness of various forms of authoritarianism in the region. In particular, in Kazakhstan, the President and the elites accumulated all political power and control the legislature, judiciary, and the mass media. Therefore, civil society organizations prefer to advocate for the interests of the official government to avoid possible punishment in case of opposing the regime (Ziegler 2010, 806). Moreover, the old Soviet legacy of total control of associational life and a wide gap between the rural and urban population weakens communication between groups and helps further maintain a "collaborative" civil society. In addition, the author contends that the people of Kazakhstan themselves prefer "system supporting" forms of political participation because they prioritize stability over democracy. It can be applicable to all social groups, including the most

educated and affluent middle class, who prefer to secure their wealth rather than demand liberal changes. Thus, it is early to think that civil society in Kazakhstan will soon overtly oppose the regime (Ziegler 2010, 805-816).

As was discussed earlier economic development creates a set of variables capable of setting modernization into motion. *Education* is one of these crucial factors influencing the creation of an enlarging middle class, an active civil society, and a youth interested in the political life of their country. This variable and its connection to democratization is the main topic of the research by Glaeser et al (2007). The authors hold a “socialization” hypothesis – a view that education increases the level and quality of cooperation of young people (Glaeser, Ponzetto, and Shleifer 2007, 78-79). According to their quantitative analysis and theoretical framework, education and a rising level of social communication enable the youth to understand and properly articulate the benefits of democratization to other parts of society, thereby increasing the proportion of society interested in the liberalization of the regime (Glaeser, Ponzetto, and Shleifer 2007, 85). In a similar way, Spilimbergo (2009) conducted a statistical research to find out whether foreign education increases the probability for democratization in the home country of students. His main finding presents a connection between these two variables, however, the interpretation of the results shows that the effect holds only if a host country is already democratic (Spilimbergo 2009, 528-529).

Scholars seeking to connect education to democratization often run quantitative analyses. An example of this can be seen in research by Benavot (1996), which compares the influence of mass education to the impact of “tertiary” education on the democratization process. The former type exerts a “socialization” effect on the young generation by making them much more aware of their rights, introducing the benefits of a democratic political system, and it also has a positive influence on the working class by producing a sophisticated labor force capable of overtly demonstrating their political demands (Benavot 1996, 384-

385). On the other hand, the author also mentions an “institutional” theory of education, which emphasizes the role of higher education on the narrower social circle. The given approach is claimed to consolidate once democracy is established through creating the certified elites that can legitimately promote democratic reforms, skillfully rule the country, and overall, change the course of the political regime (Benavot 1996, 386). The statistical evidence found by the author is more inclined toward the causal relationship between “tertiary” education and democratic consolidation (Benavot 1996, 403). On the other hand, Kamens (1988) is also interested in the effects of mass and institutionalist theories of the education-democratization approach. He contends that the most decisive role in politics should be given to the quality of education as well as the involvement of the state in spreading this public good (Kamens 1988, 118). In particular, the author holds that if the state actively interferes with the elite education, then those elites rarely become initiators of liberal reforms, but more often turn to be state-workers, who strengthen the incumbent regime (Kamens 1988, 119). In addition to this, Castello-Climent’s (2008) analysis puts greater emphasis not only on the effect of the level of education (primary, tertiary), but rather on the even distribution of this public good among different layers of strata. The author holds that an equal spread of education precludes the repression of ordinary society by political elites, and makes the masses much more informed about their rights, freedoms, and alternative ways of public politics (Castelló-Climent 2008, 180).

Likewise, Kurzman and Leahey (2004) talk about the role of social classes in the democratic transformation of states. They suggest that “intellectuals”, the most educated and skilled part of a social strata, possess a great strength in leading a country toward political changes. The authors hold that “intellectuals” served both as leaders of revolutionary movements and the organizational structure of democratic changes in the beginning and end of the XX century (Kurzman and Leahey 2004, 938). After regime change, these people also

defined and pursued their interests (human rights, freedom of the press, essential public goods), which then managed to find broader support among the rest of society (Kurzman and Leahey 2004, 959). Besley and Reynal-Querol (2011) use education to show how a population demonstrates their responsibility in selecting an accountable political leader. The authors hypothesize that in democracies people tend to select more educated leaders as a sign of honesty and personal integrity of the future incumbent (Besley and Reynal-Querol 2011, 553). The authors conclude that constituents of democratic states are 20% more likely to elect a leader with higher (Ph.D. or Master degree) educational attainment, which serves as evidence of their preoccupation with a future leader's professional skills (Besley and Reynal-Querol 2011, 556).

Contrary to the “structuralist” approach discussed above, there is a position held among scholars, that there is a set of official and traditional institutions responsible for the development and consolidation of a democracy. Bueno de Mesquita and Downs (2005) answer the question why certain states do not democratize despite high level of economic growth. In their view, some authoritarian leaders can be very skillful and benefit from financial upsurges and suppress opposition movements (Bueno de Mesquita and Downs 2005, 77-78). According to the authors, this can be attained by limiting the amount of “coordination goods” such as civil and political liberties, free media, and higher education, which might nurture viable opposition groups and threaten the incumbents (Bueno de Mesquita and Downs 2005, 82). This school of thought is also advocated by Acemoglu and Robinson (2001), as their quantitative study reports no evidence concerning a systematic relationship between economic growth and democratization (Acemoglu and Robinson 2001, 1044). Instead, their numerical findings suggest that political and economic development is path-dependent, and it is prior institutions established due to certain historical events, not

necessarily economic growth, that actually influence the direction of politics (Acemoglu and Robinson 2001, 1054-1057).

Apart from the theoretical grounds, my work requires a clear conceptualization of terms. One of the most important points concerns definitions for democracy and democratization. This can be a comprehensive task since scholars use and propose different views on this issue. For instance, for Lipset (1959) democracy is a “political system which supplies regular constitutional opportunities for changing government officials”. There are three conditions to measure democracy: a) system of values and beliefs (parties, free press, elections) legitimizing a democratic form of governance; b) leaders in office; and c) leaders outside of office (legitimate opposition).(Lipset 1959, 71). Dahl sees democracy through “electoral” lenses, describing it as a system which practices regular elections and provides constituents with full information and freedom to choose their political leaders (Benavot 1996, 379). In addition to this emphasis on electoral democracy, Inglehart and Welzel (2009) include the degree by which citizens can fully enjoy their civil rights and political freedoms, measuring this with the help of the widely-known Freedom House and World bank indexes (Inglehart and Welzel 2009, 44).

For Tilly (2007) the level of democracy depends on a degree of relationships between citizens and state or how a state confirms demands of its citizens. Moreover, these relationships are measured according to the indicators such as "breadth", "equality", "protection", and "mutually binding consultation". These terms refer to how wide are demands being confirmed, how equally they are addressed by a state, how demanders are protected against arbitrary coercion, as well as the extent to which citizens and state committed to the process of public politics (Tilly 2007, 13). In addition, breadth, equality, protection and mutually binding consultation are the terms reflecting how inclusive the citizenship is in particular state, whether citizens are treated equally, whether they are safe

from unjust punishment, and whether people have to use such instruments as corruption and blackmail to obtain social benefits (Tilly 2007, 14). According to Tilly, a movement towards broader, equal, protected and mutually binding consultation between these two parties (citizens and state) equals to democratization while backsliding from these factors implies de-democratization. Furthermore, the author argues that there are small and "recurrent" mechanisms capable of setting in motion processes that might bring democratization. These background processes include "integration of trust networks into state politics", "insulation of major categorical inequalities from political life" as well as "decrease in the autonomy of major power centers from public politics" (Tilly 2007, 23). These imply that eradication of kinship, patron-client relationships, reducing social and economic inequality, and recruiting regional power holders to state affairs are crucial for democratic development.

Accordingly, political scientists endow the notion of *democratization* with varying definitions based on their view and understanding of this process. In his analysis, Rustow (1970) criticizes existing methodologies of studying democratization as being focused on the narrow and uniform set of causes such as economic and social factors or "consensus" among society (Rustow 1970, 337-339). The author proposes his own method, which argues that conditions favoring the generation and consolidation of democracy are not the same, and vary according to time, place and society. Moreover, there should be a differentiation of factors that can influence both the ordinary population and elites (Rustow 1970, 346-347). More importantly, Rustow develops a mechanism describing the process of democratization that may or may not include any of the "structural" causes suggested by Lipset or other modernization theorists. The procedure consists of four main components: a) "background conditions"; b) "preparatory phase"; c) "decision phase"; and d) "habituation phase". To be more precise, "national unity" serves as a necessary precondition that integrates people in their pursuit of a common goal, while in the "preparatory" stage there emerges a sharp

conflict of ideas or classes. In the next, “decision”, step, a narrow circle of the leaders representing conflicting parties negotiate to find a common ground that can have a culmination, including the adoption of a democratic change. The last phase is centered around integrating liberal decision-making into all aspects of political and social life, which can help to increase trust among society, the legitimate ruling officials, as well as enhance state-society relationships (Rustow 1970, 350-362).

In contrast, Huntington (1991) finds democratization to be a reversible process which comes and goes in “waves”. The author lists a series of causal factors that 1) induce democratization; 2) lead to backsliding, and 3) impede its development (Huntington 1991, 12). To be more precise, there are “internal” causes of the process – a weakening of the legitimacy of authoritarian leaders and socioeconomic development. The “external” causes, on the other hand, might include changing world order and “demonstration effect” of the successful transition of neighboring states (Huntington 1991, 14-17). Likewise, state and society may decide to turn back to authoritarianism in case of a harsh economic crisis, expansion of influence of strong authoritarian regimes, as well as the absence of liberal values both among the elites and masses. Special attention is granted to the role of culture and wealth of a nation in determining its pathway towards or away from democracy. Huntington argues that while the former cause might lose its credibility in the long-run, economic development will stay as a strong factor that influences the democratization of the state. Overall, the author concludes that a certain state might have different causes affecting its decision to follow democratization or return to autocratic regime (Huntington 1991, 18-33).

As far as this research is focused on Kazakhstan and its possibilities to democratize, it is necessary to provide a plausible definition of the regime currently practiced in the country. In his book, Linz describes authoritarianism as a regime with “limited pluralism”, “lack of

ideology”, and “weak political mobilization” in which power exercised by a leader or a small group of leaders without clear boundaries (Linz 2000, 159). Moreover, in their differentiation of authoritarianism, Hadenius and Teorell (2007) offer various types of authoritarian systems starting with “military” and ending up with the “limited multiparty regimes”. The last type is an authoritarian system in which a certain amount of opposition is “allowed” and there are elections in place, however, they are not free and fair, and the dominant party will win or gain the most seats one way or another (Hadenius and Teorell 2005, 147). Therefore, taken into account the presence of the dominant party Nur-Otan that always wins the largest proportion (80%) (Forbes) of political seats after elections, and the leader who has been in office since independence of the country, we can define Kazakhstan as an authoritarian or a “limited multiparty” authoritarian regime.

Overall, the literature on modernization and democratization mostly focuses on the structural (e.g. economic growth) and institutional (e.g. elections) conditions increasing the possibility for regime change. This research project contributes to the vast body of works studying the relationship between *education* as an explanatory variable and democratization of the country. In contrast to the large quantitative analysis, it focuses on the single case of Kazakhstan and compares the values of the recipients of education within one country. Moreover, the study utilizes original survey and interviews to explore whether there is a correlation between education type (Western or non-Western) and liberal values.

Theoretical Framework: Western Education and Change in Values

The previous chapter revealed the opinion of advocates as well as opponents of modernization theory. Whereas the former group of scholars supports the idea that there are some structural causes that can transform the regime from the inside (Lipset 1959, Berman 2001, Boix and Stokes 2003), others reject this opinion and argue that the type of leader in power, prior established institutions, and unexpected external forces are the variables that can really produce regime change (Przeworski and Limongi 1997, Bueno de Mesquita and Downs 2005, Acemoglu and Robinson 2009). On the other hand, taking into consideration existing debates and criticisms of modernization theory, Inglehart and Welzel (2005) designed their own understanding of the modernization argument that will be used as the basis of this research.

Inglehart and Welzel decided to stand aside from the established linear version of the argument and presented a novel theory explaining how economic growth can empower ordinary people to demand democratic change (Inglehart and Welzel 2005). The authors use the expanded definition of democracy and argue that a more plausible and “effective” democratic system implies the ability of ordinary people to pressure elites and change the course of public policy (Welzel and Inglehart 2008, 126). According to the mechanism proposed by the authors, socioeconomic development cannot itself foster democratization. However, an abundance of “action” resources and educational opportunities that it entails produce a “knowledge society” more interested in advocating their civil and political rights than accumulating wealth (Welzel and Inglehart 2008, 128).

In a post-industrial society, the overall well-being of the population significantly improves; therefore, there is no more constant preoccupation with physical and economic security. Instead, material resources grant ordinary people a freedom to plan their lives, upgrade skills, and improve social interactions. As a result, there appears a society of high-

skilled individuals, where people live in an environment of increased interpersonal trust and value autonomous thinking. A society that is free from material concerns would strongly emphasize the necessity of public institutions that will not restrict their basic freedoms and protect their indispensable rights. Therefore, this new post-industrial population would put pressure on officials, and demand a more liberal form of government (Welzel and Inglehart 2008, 132).

The authors associate these shifts in the stages of social development with the change from “survival” to “self-expression” values. The former set of norms belongs to the pre-industrial era when people were mainly preoccupied with making ends meet and attaining economic security. While the latter beliefs correspond to the period when a population is rich enough to emphasize the importance of individual pursuits (Inglehart and Baker 2000, 21–22).

But is it plausible to think that democracy becomes more probable through the development of particular values at the individual level? How about the role of sociopolitical institutions that are recognized as the basis of a democratic state? In his description of “polyarchies” – the modern large-scale democratic countries - Dahl lists six important attributes of a government operating under a democratic regime: “freedom of expression”, free, fair and frequent elections”, “elected officials”, “alternative sources of information”, “associational life”, and “inclusive citizenship” (Dahl 2005, 188). He contends that historically when city-states became obsolete, there emerged countries with a growing population, so frequent gatherings to decide on political matters became infeasible. Therefore, it was more sensible to choose a person or a group of people who would represent their interests on a higher level. As far as these six elements can be found in the democracies of past and present, these institutions are both necessary for a transition to democracy and a consolidation of young regime. In addition to this, the author argues that these attributes are

necessary to guarantee people's participation in politics and ensure their understanding of policies (Dahl 2005, 196–197).

Nonetheless, what if there is no fertile ground for the consolidation of the mentioned institutions? There are numerous cases when they were installed into former authoritarian regimes, but their operation was far from ideal. A government may have free elections, respect for personal freedoms, and a right to associational life on paper, however, the reality shows the opposite. In most authoritarian states elections are a façade and civil society groups as well as the media are tightly controlled by the government (Levitsky and Way 2002, 53–54). In such states, elected officials are deaf to the interests of publicity and prefer to pursue their own benefits (Welzel and Inglehart 2008, 127–130). Therefore, it is important to focus on a more “liberal” definition of democracy, in which such institutions emerge and develop due to the demands of society. Again, the more prosperous a nation becomes, the more people will have access to material and intellectual resources. Thus, they will be ready to focus on individual goals that are more probable under the conditions of democracy. A growing size of enlightened people will make repression costlier for elites, therefore, there is a high probability that the regime will gradually change with the help of people prioritizing freedom, trust, tolerance and autonomous decision-making (Welzel and Inglehart 2008, 134).

What norms belong to these “survival” and “self-expression” values? Inglehart differentiates them as “materialist” and “post-materialist” values (Inglehart 1971). The former refer to the salience of issues related to all forms of security: getting a decent job, safe neighborhood, and a stable government. When resources are scarce, people see representatives of other nations as “rivals”, who may take their jobs; hence, there is a high intolerance towards foreigners. In addition, population holding “survival” norms tend to support an authoritarian government unless it ensures stability. They stick to conformist norms in relation to women and the LGBTQ community and are not preoccupied with

environmental problems. On the other hand, people inclined to “post-materialist” norms usually welcome new cultures, respect minorities, as well as emphasize the importance of gender equality. Individuals, possessing such a set of values, prioritize freedom of expression, autonomous decision-making, interpersonal trust and tolerance of outgroups. They are not reluctant to criticize the government in power and demonstrate civic activism (Inglehart and Welzel 2005, 54–56).

Nevertheless, the authors contend that culture plays a huge role in the development of society. Cultural heritage is “path-dependent” and it might either enhance the development of individualistic values or create barriers that are difficult to surpass (Inglehart and Welzel 2005, 22). Socioeconomic development might indeed bring serious changes in the values of people, however, historically established Islamic, Orthodox or Protestant traditions leave an imprint that will shape the eventual system of norms and beliefs of a given society (Inglehart and Welzel 2005, 21). For instance, it can be seen from the “map of cultural zones” developed by the authors that Protestant and English-speaking countries rank higher in self-expression values than ex-Communist countries. Inglehart and Welzel attribute this to a more decentralized character of Protestant churches that nurtured mutual trust, which coincides with the essential characteristic of “self-expression” values. Conversely, the fall of Communism resulted in a painful economic downturn and crisis that made people prioritize economic and physical security. Hence, most of the post-Communist countries are not ready to embrace democratic values (Inglehart and Baker 2000, 35).

As far as we know, Inglehart and Welzel argue that culture is indeed path-dependent and the value generation depends on certain traditions. However, education can help to nurture autonomous and independent thinking in society (Inglehart and Welzel 2005, 21). Therefore, I would like to ask the following questions: *Does the type of education matter?*

Can it influence the development of self-expression values? How does education affect the development of a particular set of values within the society?

The research projects linking education to political behavior mostly focus on the role of higher education on shaping young individuals' belief systems. The scholars focus on early adulthood due to the fact that students internalize and form political values through interaction with peers, professors, and learning information covered during classes (Gift and Krcmaric 2015, 5). There are varying arguments explaining how college/university education might influence the development of one's values (Hillygus 2005, 26). The first view suggests that education itself can equip an individual with certain skills that help him/her in differentiating and critically assessing political campaigns and participating in public politics. Moreover, the argument contends that the type of curriculum and number of years studied plays a crucial role in fostering one's participatory behavior. This "civic engagement" hypothesis claims that a student taking social science classes is able to deeply learn about the existing political systems, the importance of civil society, political participation, and how participation supports the democratic government. Thus, he or she would be eventually endowed with the knowledge that can help him/her in building future political preferences.

On the other hand, there is an alternative theory on how education impacts the political behavior of young adults. According to the "social network" proposition, the more educated a person is, the more likely that he or she will have closer links with the most knowledgeable part of the population, who work within the narrow political circle and always engage in debates concerning current sociopolitical issues (Hillygus 2005, 27-29).

In addition to this, the type and origins of the higher education are influential in nurturing the particular values of individuals. In particular, Western education is believed to contain the basic tenets of democratic norms: critical and independent thinking, respect for property rights, the right to petition the government, along with freedom of expression and

religion (Gift and Krcmaric 2015, 5). Moreover, a Western-oriented education teaches to critically analyze texts, involve students in debates, and express personal views on subjects. Besides, there are extra-curricular activities such as various student clubs and organizations, which structure and policies resemble democratic forms of governance. Students are also exposed to liberal values when they communicate with peers and professors outside of classes (Gift and Krcmaric 2015, 2).

Western-oriented education and its main components (rejection of absolute truth and blind obedience to authority, reasonable criticism of the government, and respect for other's opinion) most actively influence the norms and beliefs system of the young generation when they are educated in developed democratic countries (Gift and Krcmaric 2015, 2). Apart from internalizing the liberal values during participation in the social sciences classes and debate clubs, students learn individualism and trust through real-life experiences by witnessing peaceful protests and interacting with representatives of other religious, cultural, and sexual orientations (Gift and Krcmaric 2015, 6).

Overall, the self-expression values of trust, tolerance, critical and independent thinking can be developed over time through taking social science classes in Western universities and interacting with peers and more educated people outside of the official curriculum in countries conducive to such values.

Hypotheses

Based on the theory explained above, I developed three testable hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Additional years of education in Western universities will develop higher self-expression values in students.

This hypothesis stems from the theory contending that additional years of education enable students to fully embrace the knowledge and internalize values necessary to make political preferences, nurture participatory behavior, prioritize individualism or demonstrate

other behavioral norms common to self-expression values (Hillygus 2005, 28). As far as the Western education teaches basic tenets of self-expression values (autonomous and critical thinking, trust and tolerance, freedom of expression) senior students studying in such institutions should have more of such norms compared to freshmen. Moreover, if a university does not emphasize academic freedom, integrity, and diversity of opinions, then additional years in such institutions should not produce a significant change in values of students.

Hypothesis 2: Taking more social science courses in Western universities will develop higher self-expression values in students.

Social science specializations such as political science, sociology, literature, unlike hard sciences, contain much more courses that stress the development of critical thinking skills, ability to express one's ideas and engage students into a debate, where every opinion will be heard and respected. Therefore, students majoring in the social sciences are more exposed to the development of tolerance, independent-thinking, and freedom of expression than their peers majoring in physics, math or engineering.

Hypothesis 3: If students study in Western democratic states, they would be more exposed to self-expression values.

If a university is located in a Western country, then a foreign student, who studied there, was exposed to the development of tolerance, autonomous thinking, and freedom of speech both outside and inside of the university. This becomes possible through the official curriculum, participation in various student clubs, as well as interaction with other nationalities, religious and ethnic minorities (Gift and Krcmaric 2015, 6). Furthermore, democratic states usually have a robust civil society that overtly expresses political opinions through protests and peaceful demonstrations. Thus, foreign students can easily internalize such political behavior and consider democracy and its values as the most appropriate political system.

Alternative Explanations

There are numerous alternative variables that are not connected to the type of education obtained, but can induce people to embrace “self-expression” values: mass media and past travelling experience. To control for these rival explanations, I added the following propositions:

Hypothesis 4: Regular consumption of Western Media outlets leads to the development of self-expression values.

An individual who consumes Western media (e.g. magazines, news, and TV channels) is more prone to gain liberal values from sources other than education. News and publications might contain specific messages about new ideas, diverse opinions, and critical arguments. Thus, a person may absorb new values not necessarily due to studying in Western university, but through programs presented by these sources of information (Jebril, Stetka, and Loveless 2013).

Hypothesis 5: Frequent travelling to the Western democratic states develops self-expression values.

In general, travelling broadens people’s outlook as they directly learn new culture, languages, and traditions. Besides, when citizens of less developed democratic states travel to the advanced Western democracies, they may internalize political behavior of local society and demonstrate similar behavior in their home country (Levitz and Pop-Eleches 2010). In this case, self-expression values develop not because of the influence of Western-oriented education, but due to particular travelling habits of individuals.

Exploring Values of Astana's University Students

This chapter presents a method that I used to test my hypotheses. The personal values of people are very illusive and hard to discern, not to mention measure. Therefore, in order to find out whether the type of education influences the values of young people, I decided to use both quantitative and qualitative methods. I found the quantitative method appropriate due to the fact that the research is based on theory and measurements proposed by Inglehart and Welzel, the scholars who dedicated their academic careers to examining political cultures of the world population. The authors launched the largest cross-sectional and time-series surveys called the World Values Survey (WVS) conducted almost in all parts of the world to measure change in personal beliefs over generations (WVS Database). The survey questions were designed in consultation with the theory of “modernization through cultural change” (Inglehart and Welzel 2005). There are 13 multiple choice questions that are similar, but not exactly the same, to the inquiries presented in the World Values Survey.

Western, Non-Western and Hybrid Education in Astana

The theoretical part of my research argues that the type of education is decisive for the development of particular values in recipients. Therefore, to test this argument I decided to conduct a field research at three universities located in Astana, Kazakhstan: Nazarbayev University, Eurasian National University, and Kazakh Agro-Technical University. I assume that these institutions represent Western, Hybrid and Non-Western education respectively.

Nazarbayev University (NU) – established in 2010, NU is the best example of investment into Western Education made by the government of Kazakhstan. In contrast to other educational institutions, NU is autonomous from the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Nazarbayev University Self-Evaluation Report). It is reflected in the special law passed by the Majilis (№ 501 – V from 19.01.2011), which gives the university the ability to design its educational programs and student assessment, as well as

determine its organizational activities independently from the government (Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan on the Status of Nazarbayev University). Therefore, the university is not a subject of the annual government accreditation usually conducted in all local educational institutions to ensure compliance of activities with the educational law of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Another evidence for this is in the Charter of Nazarbayev University, which lists autonomy, self-governance, and academic freedom as the guiding principles of this organization. For instance, passage 1.6. of the General Provision of the Charter states: “The activities of the University are conducted on the basis of principles of academic freedom, integration of education, science and industry, autonomy and self-governance, collegial decision-making, social responsibility, and transparency.” (Nazarbayev University 2017). Unlike in other Higher Educational Institutions (HEI), the President of the NU is appointed not by the President of Kazakhstan or Ministry of Education and Science, but by the Supreme Board of Trustees which supervises the operation of the university.

In addition to this, since its establishment, the University works in close cooperation with leading Western institutions as the University of Wisconsin-Madison and University of Pennsylvania. These and many other Western educational institutions assisted NU in building its academic program as well as hiring academic staff. The strategic partners also provide guidance and assess whether Nazarbayev University operates in accordance with the Western academic standards. As far as foreign professors and students often visit NU, they also cultivate the specific environment emphasizing academic freedom, integrity, equality, and tolerance to other cultures (Nazarbayev University Self-Evaluation Report).

Provided the university is not under the supervision of the government, it is focused on the interests of its main stakeholders – students. Indeed, the University administration provides students with all means necessary to achieve their academic and career aspirations. All schools contain Support Services led by students that help individuals choose major and

construct schedule in accordance with their career goals. Furthermore, students also actively participate in designing and reshaping academic courses as their opinion is taken into consideration through assessment surveys and direct conversations with professors. Freedom of expression is also reflected in the activities of Student Government (SG) a body that ensures participation of students in all important aspects of the university life. Besides, there are over 130 clubs, where people can share their ideas and express their interests (Nazarbayev University 2017). Overall, an autonomous status of the university, its strategic partners, and characteristics of a student life create an environment of academic freedom, integrity, and tolerance that symbolize basic tenets of Western education.

S. Seifullin Kazakh Agro-Technical University (KATU) – founded in 1957, this higher educational institution is a legacy of the Soviet Union (SU). Similar to other universities of Kazakhstan, this public institution is strictly supervised by the Ministry of Education and Science (MES). Even though the part of the Bologna Process since 2010, Kazakhstan's higher educational institutions in general, and KATU, in particular, do not enjoy a full academic freedom to design and implement its educational program and research activities (Sagintayeva and Kurakbayev 2015). The government of Kazakhstan together with MES also appoints the head of the university, license its educational activities, check whether its academic plan reflects the strategic interests of the state, and overall control its admission, teaching and graduation process (Tempus 2012). Even the priority on majors as “Agricultural Engineering”¹ offered by KATU echoes the Soviet-style imposition of specializations necessary for the planned economy (Sagintayeva and Kurakbayev 2015, 204). The ubiquitous control by the government also stifles the attempts of the University to achieve competitiveness and accountability to students and society (Collins et al., chap. 43).

¹ For more information about S. Seifullin Kazakh Agro-Technical University and its departments, please visit www.kazatu.kz.

Accordingly, a centralized character of KATU leaves a little room for the development of academic freedom, freedom of expression, and integrity that are central to democratic values.

L. N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University (ENU) – an example of “hybrid” case selected for my research purposes. The university was established in 1996 several years after the independence of Kazakhstan.² Eurasian National University also lacks autonomous status, and its educational programs and curriculum have to be approved by the government and Ministry of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Moreover, the head of the university (Rector) is appointed by the President of Kazakhstan, which again restricts the autonomy of ENU. Therefore, in terms of independence and academic freedom ENU is no better from KATU, a case that I equalize to non-Western education in Kazakhstan. On the other hand, the university’s department of international communication actively works on increasing a number of long-term visits by exchange students and foreign faculty members coming from leading European and North American universities. An active participation in academic programs as DAAD, “Erasmus +”, and US Government initiatives allows Eurasian National University to send outstanding local students to study abroad, as well as host young people from Western universities (Eurasian National University n.d.). These actions create a fertile ground for the development of multicultural environment of tolerance and freedom of expression. In sum, ENU is still dependent on the government of Kazakhstan; however, there are possibilities for the development of liberal values within the walls of the university.

Targeted Sample: 755 Astana-based University Students

Since my research is focused on Western, non-Western and Hybrid education cases, it is hard to estimate a real population of all students representing these types of universities. Therefore, I deliberately attended three higher educational institutions located in Astana to reach adequate amount (approximately 500 from each institution) of respondents. It was also

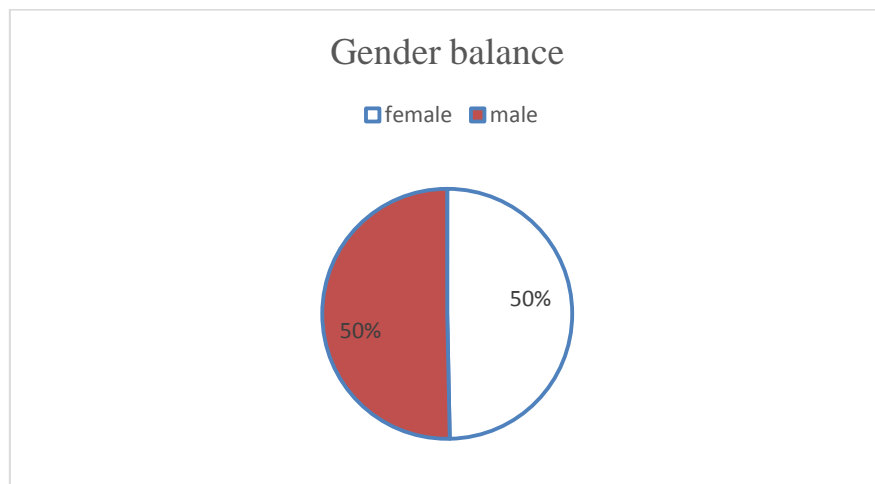
² For more information about the history of L. N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University, please visit www.enu.kz.

planned that a sample should comprise variation in seniority levels (bachelor students from the first to fourth course), as well as representatives of three departments: social sciences, natural sciences and engineering. The exact names of schools/departments in three selected universities are presented below:

Table 1. Selected University Departments

University	Nazarbayev University	Eurasian National University	Kazakh Agro-Technical University
Department	School of Humanities and Social Science	Department of Social Sciences	Economics Department
	School of Science and Technology	Department of Natural Sciences	Physics Department
	School of Engineering	Department of Information Technology	Energy Department

Thus, through this method of “targeted sampling” (Watters and Biernacki 1989, 420), I managed to collect 755 responses. The sample size per university is 269 for KATU, 338 for ENU, and 148 for the NU. Western university is underrepresented due to time constraints, as too much time was invested into reaching the former university officials. Of the total 755 people 375 are female, while the remaining 380 are male students:

Figure 1 Gender Balance of the Sample Collected

If we divide the total by universities and schools, the numbers are as follows³:

Table 2. The Sample Grouped According to Universities and Departments

<i>University</i>	<i>Department</i>		
	<i>Science and Technology</i>	<i>Engineering</i>	<i>Social Science</i>
NU	54	31	63
ENU	107	112	119
KATU	77	123	69

Recruitment and Ethical Issues

In order to carry out a research in compliance with the Nazarbayev University Institutional Research Committee (IREC), I requested official authorization from NU, ENU and KATU administrations. After receiving approval, the departments provided me with their official curriculum from which I randomly selected classes for this research. After that, I attended the chosen courses and used verbal recruitment to gather volunteers. The survey

³ Another obstacle that I faced during my research was a situation with seniors of Kazakh Agro-Technical university, as they were on their required industrial internship. Therefore, fourth-year students of Kazakh Agro-Technical University were underrepresented in the sample.

questions were handed down to those who agreed to participate and only to students who are 18 years-old. They were given full instructions and understanding about the purposes of the study through informed consent. The anonymity of respondents was guaranteed by excluding personal identifiers from the questions. The average time taken for a survey was 10 minutes. The survey results are used only for the purposes of the given research.

Measurements and Coding of Dependent, Independent and Control Variables

This chapter introduces the original survey data I use to test the hypotheses and presents the operationalization of my dependent, independent and control variables.

Dependent Variable: Self-Expression Value

This part offers definitions and coding for the outcome variable – self-expression that was utilized for hypotheses one and two. According to Inglehart and Welzel (2005), societies with self-expression values prioritize the protection of environment, trust, tolerance to minorities, and they see women as good as men in all professional areas. Moreover, they are against an authoritarian regime and express a strong willingness to participate in economic and political decision-making of their country. On the other extreme, there are survival norms experienced by economically insecure people, who tend to focus on material benefits, physical security, suspicious about the foreigners, and reluctant to show their opinion publicly. Besides, societies with such values support even harsh and close regimes unless such states can maintain stability (Inglehart and Welzel 2005, 52–54). The early works of Inglehart (1971) develop the basic idea about such a set of personal beliefs. The author argues that if an individual prioritizes wealth and security over other goals, it is a sign of “materialist” values, whereas giving high priority to education, autonomy, and other non-material needs symbolize “post-materialist norms” (Deth 1983, 64).

With these theoretical concepts in mind, I constructed the variable for the first two hypotheses – *Value*. I developed the *Value* variable in two steps. First, I coded six indicators based on the questions I asked in my survey.⁴ These six indicators include students’ priorities of world problems, their attitude towards demonstrations, capitalism, elections and women in politics, as well as their understanding of real attributes of a democratic state. The exact coding of these indicators is summarized in Table 3. Second, I constructed my main

⁴ For more detailed information on survey questions, please, see Appendix.

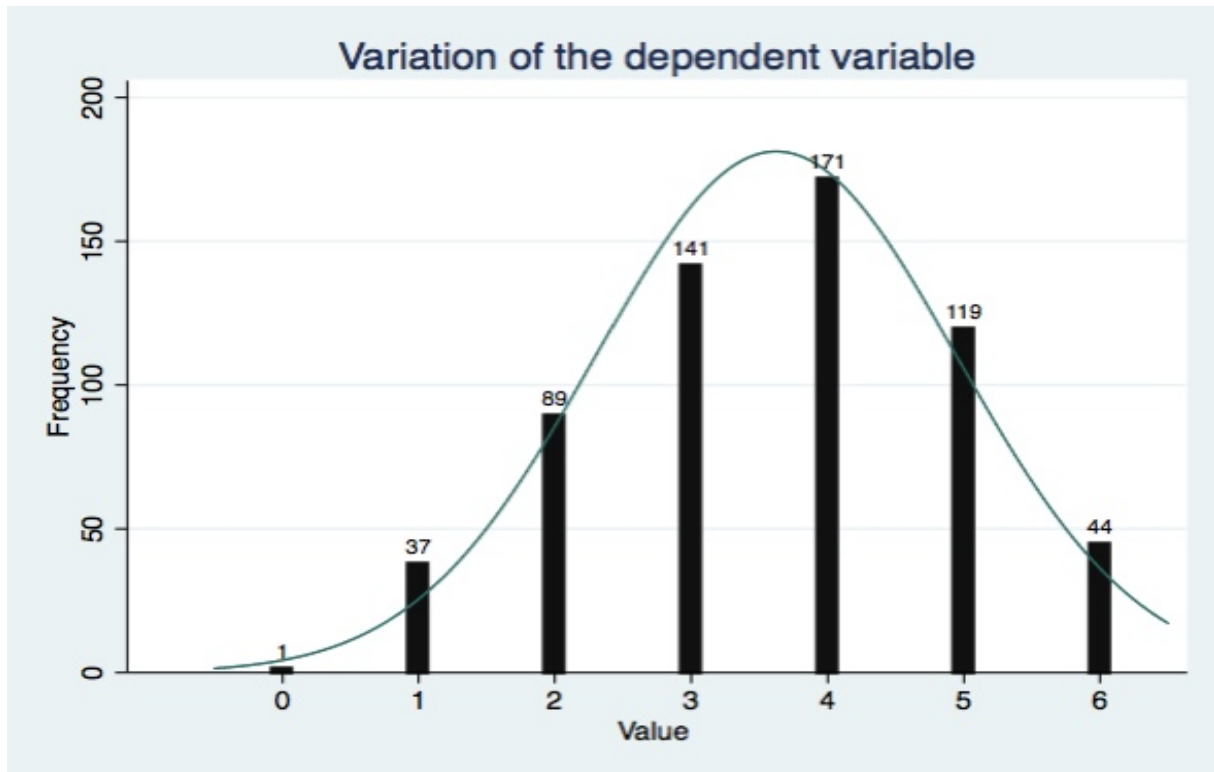
dependent variable, *Value*, by summing scores for these six indicators for each respondent. Thus, the *Value* is a composite index, whose values range from 0 to 6. Higher scores indicate that respondents have higher *self-expression* values, whereas lower scores show that they possess *survival* values. Figure 2 shows the variation of *Value* variable in my sample.

Table 3. Coding of the Six Indicators Constructed from the Survey Questions

N	Indicator	Survey question	Coding
1.	World problems	<i>Which of the following is the most serious and compelling modern problem?</i>	1=violation of human rights/gender discrimination/environmental concern. 0=global economic crisis/terrorism. The answers <i>hard to say</i> and <i>I refuse</i> were coded as missing values. ⁵
2.	Capitalism	<i>Capitalism is good for the development of the national economy...</i>	1=strongly agree/ agree. 0=disagree/strongly disagree, do not have an opinion.
3.	Demonstrations	<i>Do you think that you would participate in a peaceful demonstration?</i>	1= I would certainly/I might participate. 0= I would not/I probably would not participate.
4.	Democratic state	<i>What do you think is an essential characteristic of a democratic state?</i>	1=active civil society/respect for human rights/the rule of law. 0=multiple parties/social services/elections.
5.	Elections	<i>Do you think that your vote during Presidential/Parliament elections influences the final results?</i>	1= my vote is very influential/ influential. 0= my vote is not so influential/ elections has no purpose.
6.	Women in Politics	<i>What do you think about women in politics?</i>	1 = women should be involved. 0 = women should not be involved.

⁵ This coding rule applies to all questions in the survey.

Figure 2 Variation in Dependent Variable - Value



Note. The histogram shows a composite index *Value* that was constructed by adding binary variables measuring the presence of survival or self-expression values of survey participants. The values from 4 to 6 are attributable to *self-expression* norms, while values from 0 to 3 represent *survival* norms.

Independent and Control Variables: Duration, Type, and Content of Education, Media and Travelling

In order to test my hypothesis 1, I created an independent variable *Years of Education*⁶ by using survey responses. It ranges from 1 to 4, capturing how long a respondent has studied in his/her university.

To capture the type of universities of the respondents, I prepared three independent variables: *NU*, *ENU*, and *KATU*. The *NU* variable represents the Western university and coded as '1' if a student attends Nazarbayev University. The *KATU* represents the non-Western university and coded as '1' if a respondent is in Kazakh Agro-Technical University.

⁶ The variable years of education is not derived from the survey question concerning the age of the respondent. The Principle Investigator asked to clarify the survey respondents their year of education along with their age.

The *ENU* belongs to the Hybrid university, and it is coded as ‘1’ if a participant goes to Eurasian National University.

Hypothesis 2 focuses on the influence of major specializations of students and composition of the courses that they attend. Hence, to indicate the major specializations of students I used three different dummy variables. The *SHSS* is a variable that represents the social sciences and coded as ‘1’ if a respondent specializes in humanities and social science. The *SST* refers to Science and Technology majors, and it is coded as ‘1’ if a participant belongs to the department of Science and Technology. The *ENG* is the variable for representatives of Engineering department, and it is coded as ‘1’ if a student has a major in engineering.⁷

The details on the coding of main independent variables are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Coding of the Independent Variables Constructed from the Survey Questions

N	Variable	Survey Question	Coding
1.	Years of Education	It was indicated during the surveys. ⁸	1 = first year; 2 = second year; 3 = third year; 4 =fourth year of studying.
2.	Type of Major	<i>...select the answer which most coincides with your school/department.</i>	1=SHSS; 0=Otherwise. 1=SST; 0=Otherwise. 1=ENG; 0=Otherwise.
3.	Education Type	<i>Could you please select your University?</i>	1=NU; 0=Otherwise. 1=ENU; 0 =Otherwise. 1=KATU; 0=Otherwise.

Note: More detailed information on survey questions and answers is available in Appendix.

⁷ These are the abbreviations for School of Humanities and Social Science (SHSS), School of Science and technology (SST), and School of Engineering (ENG). For the alternative departments located in non-Western and Hybrid universities please see Table 2.

⁸ The Principle Investigator asked the survey respondents to clarify their year of education along with their age.

Apart from type, duration, and composition of education the research also has to account for alternative factors influencing the development of particular value patterns in young adults. Modernization enlightens people not only through education, but also with the help of other instruments. One of such tools is *Western media* outlets. According to “diffusion hypothesis”, Western media can disseminate certain values embedded into content that it usually broadcasts. Thus, by publishing news about democratic states, a participatory behavior of Western society and a necessity to advocate for human rights, mass media can develop liberal values in people living in non-democratic countries (Jebril, Stetka, and Loveless 2013, 18). In addition to the effect of mass media consumption, travelling to advanced Western democracies can have an influence on individuals from non-democracies or weak democratic states. It is argued that greater opportunities from travelling to the developed EU countries helped citizens from post-communist Central and Eastern Europe internalize Western European values and participate more actively in public politics (Levitz and Pop-Eleches 2010, 462). These arguments gave me a theoretical ground to include control variables *Western media* and *Travelling to the West* to check if they have an influence on the development of self-expression values in survey respondents. These variables were generated based on questions I asked in my survey. Details on coding and measurement can be found in Table 5.

Table 5. Coding of the Control Variables Constructed from the Survey Questions

N	Variable	Survey Question	Coding
1.	Western Media	<i>How often do you view Western media outlets?</i>	1 = often/very often 0 = not so often/ never
2.	Travelling to the West	<i>How often do you travel to the West?</i>	1 = often/very often 0 = not so often/ never

Note: More detailed information on survey questions and answers is available in Appendix.

Statistical Analyses of Hypotheses 1 and 2

The purpose of this chapter is to describe statistical models and present empirical results for my hypotheses. I used data collected through survey research in three universities located in Astana. Moreover, I used ordinary least squares (OLS) regressions to give evidence for my theoretical arguments.

The Effect of Years of Education

Hypothesis 1: Additional years of education in Western universities will develop higher self-expression values in students.

The hypothesis is based on the theory arguing that additional years of higher education develop participatory behavior, responsibility, and independent decision-making - norms central to self-expression values. Moreover, the effect of the additional years of education on the development of self-expression norms should be higher for respondents studying in the universities practicing academic freedom and integrity (Western universities).

To test this argument, I used the following OLS model:

$$\widehat{Value}_i = \alpha + \beta_1 Years\ of\ Education_i + \beta_2 NU_i + \beta_3 NU \times Years\ of\ Education_i + \beta_4 Western\ Media_i \quad (1)$$

This main model is designed to investigate whether there is a positive and linear relationship between the main independent variable – *Years of Education* and the outcome variable - *Value*. In addition to this, a coefficient of the interaction term, β_3 , captures whether the positive effect of the additional years of education is greater for Western university (*NU*) students. The model also includes control variable *Western Media* to find out whether high self-expression norms were influenced by the respondents' preference for particular type of media outlets.

Table 6 reports the results for OLS regression. The first column presents the coefficients for a simple linear equation including only the main independent variable. The

coefficient estimate for *Years of Education* is positive and statistically significant, suggesting that students hold higher self-expression values as they spend more time in universities. From the substantive point, my results show that on average a freshman student scores about 3.5 on *Value*, whereas this index for a senior student is almost 4.5. This effect size is substantively meaningful. Moreover, Model 2 (the second column) includes my control variable Western Media, but the results remain categorically the same. So far, evidence indicates that students' self-expression values increase with their time spent studying at universities.

Table 6. OLS Regression with Years of Education as the Main Independent Variable

	(1)	(2)	(5)	(6)	(7)
VARIABLES	Model 1	Model 2	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7
Years of Education	0.152*** (0.0481)	0.139*** (0.0483)	0.0348 (0.0587)	0.0494 (0.0589)	-0.0952 (0.0868)
NU			0.0991 (0.332)	0.219 (0.343)	-0.206 (0.378)
NU×Years of Education			0.174 (0.117)	0.110 (0.119)	0.243* (0.135)
Western Media		0.302*** (0.111)		0.156 (0.117)	0.514*** (0.163)
Constant	3.312*** (0.115)		3.418*** (0.126)	3.347*** (0.136)	3.527*** (0.206)
Observations	581	566	581	566	320
R-squared	0.017 (Full Sample)	0.030 (Full Sample)	0.048 (Full Sample)	0.051 (Full Sample)	0.096 (NU & KATU)

Note: Standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

The last three models presented in Table 6 analyze whether the effect of years of education is dependent on the university type. Models 5 and 6 (Table 6) give positive coefficients of the interaction term between the *Years of Education* and *NU* variable. This is consistent with my expectation that the effect of the main independent variable (*Years of Education*) is stronger in a Western-style education environment than in other systems. However, the estimated coefficients are not statistically significant in Models 5 and 6, therefore, the results do not report any strong empirical evidence to argue that the effect of additional years of studying is greater for Western university students.

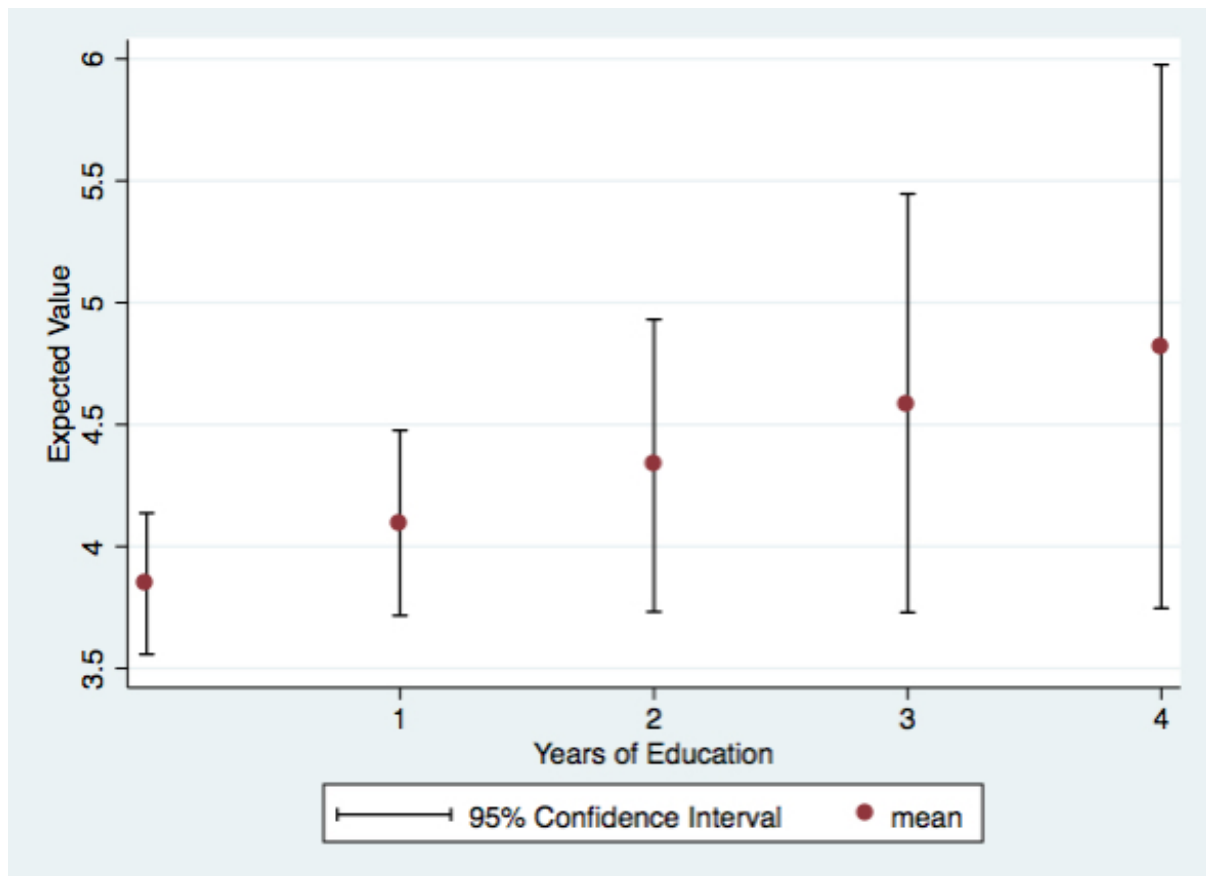
On the other hand, when I ran the same regression with a limited sample including only observations for a Western and non-Western University, the results present some support for Hypothesis 1. The decision to drop Hybrid cases came with the assumption that they lie in the middle of the Western and non-Western extremes. Therefore, by excluding the observations for Hybrid University, I can investigate the relationship between independent and dependent variable for observations from two drastically different families. Interestingly, the coefficient of the interaction term in column 7 remains positive and became marginally significant. Hence, my analysis gives some statistical support for my original hypothesis stating that the effect of years of education on self-expression values is bigger for students, who are spending their undergraduate years in a Western-oriented institution compared to those in a non-Western university.

Figure 3 illustrates substantive effects of additional years of education on self-expression values for Western university students in a sample reduced to Western and non-Western cases. By using the values of the interaction term ($NU \times \text{Years of Education}$)⁹, I have constructed the graph that illustrates how the expected means of self-expression score

⁹ This variable is generated by multiplying dummy for Nazarbayev University (1 = NU; 0 = otherwise) and Years of Education (quantitative variable ranging from 1 to 4), therefore the interaction terms is also quantitative and ranges from 0 to 4.

changes with values of *Years of Education* given that a student studies at Nazarbayev University. Although confidence intervals around the estimates are highly uncertain, the figure demonstrates a steady increase in the mean indicator of one's personal values with the additional years of education. Substantively speaking, we can see that mean *Value* score of a first-year student studying at Western University is 4.1, while for a fourth-year NU student this indicator, on average, is close to 5. This means that a self-expression value of an average respondent studying in Western university (NU) becomes higher with additional years of education. Hence, there is weak statistical evidence in favor of my first hypothesis.

Figure 3 Expected Value. The Relationship between the Years of Education and Self-Expression Values for Western University Students



It is important to note that coefficient of my control variable *Western Media* in column 6 (Table 6) is statistically significant and positively correlated with the *Value* variable. This means that if a respondent regularly watches Western Media outlets, his or her

self-expression values increases by 0.5. Based on this finding, I can infer that there is strong statistical evidence supporting the alternative explanation for the development of self-expression values in university students, who participated in my research (Jebril, Stetka, and Loveless 2013).

In sum, the linear regression analyses, conducted by using my survey data, support the original hypothesis stating that self-expression values increase with the additional years of education. Moreover, the last model provided some empirical evidence in favor of my proposition claiming that the effect of years of education is stronger for Western university students. Even though estimates of the last model (excluding Hybrid cases) are uncertain, the report shows that on average self-expression values of Nazarbayev University students, who took part in my research, grow as they spend more time enjoying academic freedom.

The Effect of Social Sciences

Hypothesis 2: Taking more social science courses in Western universities will develop higher self-expression values in students.

From the theoretical framework of my research project, we learned that the structure of official academic curriculum might explain the growth of post-materialist values in the recipients of education. In particular, students who study political science will genuinely focus on the importance of democracy and liberalism. Likewise, people specializing in sociology, history, anthropology and other liberal arts might have higher self-expression values compared to respondents focusing on other disciplines.

To find out whether there is a relationship between the proportion of social science classes taken and self-expression values, I used the following OLS model:

$$\widehat{Value}_i = \alpha + \beta_1 SHSS + \beta_2 NU_i + \beta_3 NU \times SHSS_i + \beta_4 Western Media_i + \beta_5 Travelling to the West_i \quad (2)$$

In the Equation (2) above, the coefficient β_3 is the estimate responsible for investigating whether positive effect of social science courses on self-expression norms is

dependent on a type of university. The given model also accounts for the influence of other covariates (*Western Media and Travelling to the West*) on the development of post-materialist values in the recipients of my survey.

The results of OLS regression are presented in Table 7. The first column reports that contrary to my hypothesis 2, a sign of the estimate for social science major is negative. This means that taking social science courses leads to the decrease in self-expression norms of the respondents. On the other hand, when the same analysis was repeated for a limited sample including only observations for Nazarbayev University students, the relationship between the independent and dependent variables becomes positive, yet not statistically significant. This direction of the estimate for *SHSS* variable presented in the second column (Table 7) corresponds to my original hypothesis only for observations representing Western university students. Model 4 presents the results for equation (2) which includes an interaction term indicating whether the effect of social sciences is dependent on Western education. The estimate of the interaction term ($SHSS \times NU$)¹⁰ is positive but lacks statistical significance. Hence, I did not find any empirical support to assert that social science courses increase my respondents' self-expression values and that the effect of liberal arts is more salient in the case of Western university students. Thus, the major specializations of students have little impact on the development of the specific set of norms and beliefs.

¹⁰ Interaction terms is constructed by multiplying dummy variables *SHSS* and *NU* that indicate social science majors and Western education respectively. The new variable also takes values 0 and 1.

Table 7. OLS Regression with the Social Science and Engineering as the Main Independent Variables

VARIABLES	(1) Model 1	(2) Model 2	(3) Model 3	(4) Model 4
SHSS	-0.0117 (0.135)	0.142 (0.245)	-0.0512 (0.139)	-0.173 (0.135)
NU				0.532*** (0.174)
SHSS×NU				0.184 (0.270)
Western Media			0.341*** (0.113)	0.157 (0.119)
Travelling to West			-0.207 (0.208)	-0.126 (0.205)
ENG	0.0206 (0.133)	0.473 (0.299)	0.121 (0.136)	
Constant	3.620*** (0.0979)	3.941*** (0.180)	3.471*** (0.112)	3.497*** (0.0841)
Observations	602	140	567	567
R-squared	0.000 (Full Sample)	0.018 (NU)	0.018 (Full Sample)	0.049 (Full Sample)

Note: Standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

It is worth noting that the estimate of the control variable (*Western Media*) reported in Model 3 is statistically significant and positively influences the value generation in respondents. Thus, regardless of specialization, consumption of *Western Media* on a regular basis rises *Values* score of students, who participated in my survey, by 0.341. In contrast, the second control – *Travelling to the West* does not have any influence on the development of self-expression values. Overall, the OLS regression of the equation (2) does not show any strong evidence to argue that a type of major of a student has an impact on self-expression norms. Hence, a student's self-expression values do not increase as they take more social science disciplines.

This chapter presented the analyses of survey data collected in three universities located in Astana, Kazakhstan. The purpose of the research was to investigate whether 1) additional years of education and 2) a content of academic courses have an impact on the development of self-expression values in my respondents, and whether this effect is dependent on education type. The analysis finds support for hypothesis one and shows that the relationship between years of education and self-expression norms is positive and statistically significant. Therefore, self-expression values of the survey respondents rise with the additional years spent in a higher educational institution. More importantly, the impact of additional years of schooling increases given that a person studies at Western university and this effect becomes significant (at 10%) for the limited sample excluding Hybrid cases. On the other hand, there is no evidence to think that studying democracy, history, human rights and other issues central to liberal norms might strongly affect value formation. Contrary to the initial argument, the coefficients for social science majors are negative and insignificant. These findings imply that the academic curriculum may not be a decisive factor in the development of self-expression norms. Instead, it might be more plausible to argue that atmosphere of freedom, independence, and academic integrity practiced in the Western universities helps students develop self-expression norms and advocate for liberal values regardless of their choice of future career.¹¹ This argument about a decisive role of freedom of expression, present in the academic and social life of students, in value formation, is further supported by the qualitative analysis.

¹¹ I would like to thank the second reviewer for this argument.

Examining Values of Graduates of Western Universities

In order to support my statistical findings and test the third hypothesis focused on the values of Western university graduates, I conducted several semi-structured interviews with people who have spent several years to pursue their degree in Western countries. The qualitative method is applicable for this particular hypothesis because it can produce a deep and more detailed description of one's personal experiences of studying in a foreign country and individual understanding of liberal values (Merriam and Tisdell 2016, 15). Together mixing quantitative and qualitative methodologies will be used to fully and deeply analyze the impact of the particular approach in education on the norms and beliefs of the recipients.

Population and Ethical Considerations

Although the population of the foreign university graduates living in Kazakhstan can be quite large and expanding, I used my personal network which contains friends, relatives, and acquaintances. Therefore, the estimated population of individuals that could be potentially contacted became limited to about 60 people. From this sample, I expected to interview 15 graduates who studied in Western countries.¹² They should have represented different specializations (Engineering, Science, Business and Social Science majors) and gender, as well as a variety of countries.

The recruitment of people for interviews was conducted through sending e-mails outlining the major purpose of my research and participation conditions. I met with those who agreed to participate at any place convenient for them and provided with a hard copy of my informed consent form containing information about the research, and contacts of the Personal Investigator and committee responsible for the protection of human subjects. The

¹² Democracy is measured based on ranking of countries by their current state of civil rights and political liberties, where 1 (most free) and 7 (least free) by Freedom House. “| Freedom House.” Accessed March 2, 2017. <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2016>.

average interview lasted for 15 minutes. Anonymity was ensured by replacing their real names with pseudonyms.

Sample: 11 Graduates

The third hypothesis is focused on the graduates of Western universities who completed their education abroad, so I have conducted a series of semi-structured interviews with the graduates of the “Bolashak” program and people who pursued their degrees without such government assistance. From the expected sample of 15 respondents, I managed to reach 11 people.

Table 8. Majors and Countries of Interview Participants

Respondent	Country of study	Major
1	Canada	Oil and Petroleum Engineering
2	USA	Data Science
3	Switzerland	International Hospitality Business Management
4	UK	Human Resource Management
5	Germany	German for Teaching
6	USA	Information Sciences and Technology
7	USA	Economics
8	Canada	Computer Science
9	France	International Law
10	USA	Business Management
11	USA	Journalism/Political Science

The Table 8 above illustrates that from 11 interviewees, four people have majored in Hard Sciences or Engineering, while the remaining seven have diplomas in various kinds of Management, Economics, International Law, Journalism and other social sciences. All of the respondents are from the most democratic countries with the “Free” status assigned by Freedom House. These scores and ratings are annually reported by the organization and capture operation of each country’s democratic institutions as well as respect for people’s rights and civil liberties.¹³ In addition, I would like to note that participants were contacted through “snowball sampling”. Besides, they were recruited via email message approved by the Nazarbayev University Institutional Research Ethics Committee (IREC).

Internal and External Sources of Self-expression Values

The main hypothesis related to graduates who studied abroad implies that an individual might be exposed to liberal values through official classes, participation in student clubs, interaction with other young people and professors, as well as witnessing civil society in action. As long as the interview answers are based on the individual’s personal experience (Merriam and Tisdell 2016, 15), they can be used as supplementary evidence to support my statistical findings. The major goal of the interview analysis is to uncover evidence for the change in values described by people who did their degrees in Western countries. Drawing from the interview questions designed earlier my analysis focuses on answering three sets of questions: What type of values were the graduates exposed to? How does the process of changing values unfold? In what ways does it change one’s personal beliefs and norms?

In order to reveal if respondents experienced any set of new norms in contrast to values existing in Kazakhstan’s education system, I designed the following questions: *I know*

¹³ The status is based on “Freedom ranking” developed by Freedom House: “Free” (1.0 to 2.5), “Partly Free” (3.0 to 5.0), or “Not Free” (5.5 to 7.0). The ranking is based on the scores that the organization assign to a country’s situation with “political rights” (from 1 – “most free” to 7 – “least free”) and “civil liberties” (from 1 – “most free” to 7 – “least free”). The scores are annually presented in “Freedom in the World report”. Freedom House.” Accessed March 2, 2017. <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2016>.

that during your studies you were majoring in... What courses did you take? Was there any specific emphasis on particular subjects or approaches? The responses given by participants described values embedded in university courses, student-professor relationships, as well as the official academic policies.

For instance, Anuar, who studied in the United States reveals:

At the beginning, I was a physics major and took more classes on natural sciences. However, with the switch to Business major, there were more social science classes such as Economics, Political Science, and Philosophy. The latter discipline especially changed my outlook on daily issues. I think that social sciences really broaden up your mind...In my opinion, the basic difference between the educational system of Kazakhstan and the United States lies in the US's emphasis on individualism. They provide you with infinite knowledge and sources and say that 'the sky is the limit'. I think that it develops responsibility in students. Although much of the information is not practical, it opens up your mind and develops problem-solving and critical thinking abilities. In contrast, universities in Kazakhstan still demand students to learn 'this and this' and provide very strange Soviet-style specializations that are called, for instance, 'Automatization and Certification'. I wonder what does this specialization really mean.¹⁴

It becomes clear from the passage above that the respondent was exposed to the fundamentals of a Western-oriented education – *individualism*. The academic policy stressing the importance of individual work nurtures responsibility in students and develops critical skills such as autonomous decision-making, which is central to self-expression values (Inglehart and Welzel 2005, 54). Furthermore, a participant outlined that Philosophy and other liberal arts changed his mindset and vision of the world. He also recognizes the stark contrast between being educated in Kazakhstan and the West. It can also be a sign of change in values towards the self-expression realm.

Dariga, a journalist major who studied in New York, also underscores the pervasiveness of individualism in Western universities. "If you study in the US, you would really understand that you're an individual and you have a personality. Nobody will take your

¹⁴ Interview with a graduate of Business Management by Ainur Baimuratova, Astana. February 26, 2017. In order to ensure anonymity of respondents I have changed real names into pseudonyms. This applied to all of the names used in text.

hand and say ‘go and study this book or do this’. Even if you are only 18, you are a creative person who makes her own decisions.”¹⁵

Likewise, the former student of a university located in Switzerland, Karakoz, recognizes that there was a lot of self-study. “There were tons of materials for independent research, and I found it was a huge plus. On the other hand, after our system, I felt completely lost and did not understand what ‘critical thinking’ was, as demanded by new professors.”¹⁶ These critical and analytical skills were presented as the basis of Western education norms generating participatory behavior in young people (Gift and Krcmaric 2015). Accordingly, there was an exposure to post-materialist values experienced by this respondent.

In the interview, Daniyar says:

Academic integrity was the most important thing that I should have followed while I studied in Canada. Plagiarism is completely intolerable and you will get easily expelled for copying the answers or not referencing to original source... The other interesting thing that I have noticed during my studies is that education has no age limits. People can start their degrees at various ages. You can be a student even if you are 30 or 40 years old. Moreover, the classes are really practical and the field trips are very often. I remember one time we had a trip with our Ecology professor to document the death of seals and learnt that the ecological problems happening on our planet are real.¹⁷

The quote above unfolds values that a student internalized while he was studying in Canadian university. The strict rule on plagiarism endows this person with respect for one’s intellectual property - a central issue for self-expression values. In addition, the structure of courses allows people to learn new material from a direct experience that teaches about the impending character of environmental issues. Thus, a recipient of Western-style education was exposed to self-expression values as prioritizing more intangible yet significant issues

¹⁵ Interview with a graduate of Journalism by Ainur Baimuratova, Astana, February 26, 2017.

¹⁶ Interview with a graduate of Hospitality Management by Ainur Baimuratova, Astana, February 11, 2017.

¹⁷ Interview with a graduate of Petroleum Engineering by Ainur Baimuratova, Astana, December 11, 2016.

(respect for human rights, and prioritizing the protection of the environment) (Inglehart and Welzel 2005, 54).

Apart from the composition of courses offered by Western universities, there are some remarks regarding the character of interactions between faculty and students. In particular,

It is hard to think of real disadvantages of the Western education. Perhaps, it is a bit impersonal. We studied in classes with a huge capacity and did not actually know who the professor really was. On the other hand, there is no ‘apprentice’ sort of treatment by a professor. When I was a freshman in Kazakhstan, instructors considered their opinion as dogma and felt that they had authority over students. However, in Canada, I have never been treated in a similar way... Universities in Kazakhstan really lack up-to-date academic resources, I felt that what I was learning was not enough. That is why I left Kazakhstan to study in Canada.¹⁸

Western education encourages people to speak up, to share their ideas and opinions. Professors of such universities tend to reject absolute truths and are open to debate (Cook 1999, 348). However, universities of post-communist states still have traits of the Soviet Union, where deviations from ideology and state goals were harshly punished. Such a feeling of uniform truth and superiority over students in some local academic staff can be interpreted as Soviet legacy. Therefore, it is possible that Nurzhan was exposed to liberal values though the freedom of expression enjoyed in a Canadian university.

Moreover, such values can reach a student not only on campus, but also via interaction with the local population outside of the university settings. The questions: *What basic differences did you notice between Kazakhstani society and other societies? And what can you say about the general social attitude of your country of study toward politics?* – were designed if the behavior of Western society introduced values unfamiliar to foreign students.

In her interview, Karakoz describes the people of Switzerland to be very “individualistic”. “They are autonomous and do not interfere in your personal life be it work,

¹⁸Interview with a graduate of Computer Science by Ainur Baimuratova, Astana, January 27, 2017.

studies or personal issues.” *Do you think that Swiss people are politically active?* “Switzerland is very politically stable. That is why society is not preoccupied with political issues.”¹⁹ Along with “individualism”, “open-minded” was one of the most popular answers among the research participants. Gulnur, a graduate from the United Kingdom, admits: “People in the UK are more open-minded. They are not afraid of showing their opinions. Generally, the society is more civilized and I think the happiness rate is really high. It is possible that they are happy because they are heard by their government.” *Do you want our people to be politically active?* “Yes I do, but they have to be cautious because the government is able to repress any act that they find threatening. However, I think people in Kazakhstan are a bit lazy, I would more like them to be responsible.”²⁰ The answers of young ladies reveal that the environment that they lived in was conducive to the development of post-materialist norms.

Kamshat, a teacher with an Austrian diploma, considers Austrians and Germans to be “more tolerant and open-minded”. “In Germany, people are more down-to-earth, they less use stereotypes and are not so judgmental.” Moreover, when she was asked about the political participation of people in her state of stay, she replied: “They like to talk about politics. You can often notice boycotting farmers or student-organized demonstrations.” *Do you want our (society in Kazakhstan) people to follow the same political behavior?* “Of course, I do. However, in Kazakhstan the state creates substantial barriers to such action. We should also consider this condition. Perhaps, there should be more peaceful forms of expression organized by the government, for instance, opinion polls.”²¹

¹⁹ Interview with a graduate of Hospitality Management by Ainur Baimuratova, Astana, February 11, 2017.

²⁰ Interview with a graduate of HR Management by Ainur Baimuratova, Astana, January 11, 2017.

²¹ Interview with a graduate of Pedagogy by Ainur Baimuratova, Astana, January 12, 2017.

The description of values attributable to the German and Austrian populations fits into the self-expression dimension: tolerance and standing aside from stereotypes (Inglehart and Welzel 2005, 54). More importantly, the rhetoric of this respondent coincides with the Ziegler's theory about the civil society of Kazakhstan. Indeed, he considers that as far as a state can create limits for civil society, there can be alternative and more cooperative forms of expression regarding the government decisions (Ziegler 2010, 797).

Similar to this, constraints on public participation bother a former American university student – Dariga. When asked if she wanted our people to be politically active, she replied:

We do not have freedom of speech. Do we have a right to protest? Can we do it properly? – These are the real questions. Right now if we give such a right to people – protesters could turn into uncontrollable mobs. Unfortunately, this is due to a lack of knowledge of basic rights and freedoms among the general population. There should be a change from the side of both officials and society. People should learn about their indispensable rights and local laws, while the latter group should understand that protests and demonstrations are signs of ineffective policies.²²

Thus, although exposed to liberal norms, the graduates face serious constraints to exercise these values at times when they are back in Kazakhstan.²³

Inglehart and Welzel (2005) count participation in boycotts as an action demonstrating that a person possesses self-expression norms (Inglehart and Welzel 2005, 54). The discourse of the interviewees shows that such actions were common to Western society. Amira told:

I remember there was a huge scandal involving an honored coach that worked in my university. After 20 years of work, someone revealed that this man sexually abused kids during his career. The students were split into two camps: 1) those who did not believe in this and supported the coach and 2) those who blamed him and wanted an investigation of the case. I noticed that there is always a room for diversity of opinions, and nobody is afraid to demonstrate, even if their position is unpopular.²⁴

²² Interview with a graduate of Journalism by Ainur Baimuratova, Astana, February 26, 2017.

²³ This argument belongs to my advisor.

²⁴ Interview with a graduate of Information Technologies by Ainur Baimuratova, Astana, December 12, 2016.

The fact that she realized that she was a witness of “freedom of speech” in action demonstrates that foreign students are indeed exposed to the liberal values outside of the campus (Gift and Krcmaric 2015, 6).

On the other hand, participation in the sociopolitical life of the country does not necessarily equate to being a part of strikes. Another important value witnessed by the participants is responsibility. Anuar says:

People are really active. They think that they should be involved in the life and safety of their neighborhood and community at first. They do not wait until the government would decide everything for them. They take initiatives. In the US hardly anyone would blame Obama for their problems. Most of them believe that is only their responsibility to make changes.²⁵

Self-expression values presume that a person does not think that a government provides for everything (Inglehart and Welzel 2005, 54). If an individual contributes to the well-being of society, it is a participatory behavior that makes him or her an owner of post-materialist views. Anuar’s response is another example of self-expression values attributable to Western people that might affect young representatives of another culture.

Canadians are very reserved. They do not interfere in your life and do not want to share personal issues with others. The relationship between generations is very capitalistic. When children turn 18, they have to pay their parents for food and shelter. Canadians pay serious attention to the problems of inequality, for instance, they are against gender discrimination. Moreover, they advocate for the rights of the indigenous population that have been largely marginalized. There is a high level of tolerance because of the constant migration of people from around the world. Furthermore, in Canada people are very socially responsible, they work for the benefit of their society and preserve security as a public good. Government workers of high positions are very close to the general population, and people can easily get in touch even with the Prime Minister of the country. Besides, people are very politically active and ready to demonstrate for any issue. However, the character of the protests is highly organized as various forms of NGOs actively assist civil society to exercise their rights. If there is a peaceful protest, the government and people are warned in advance in order to avoid any disturbances. I support such forms of expression because protests signal that a government is doing something wrong.²⁶

²⁵ Interview with a graduate of Business Management by Ainur Baimuratova, Astana. February 26, 2017.

²⁶ Interview with a graduate of Petroleum Engineering by Ainur Baimuratova, Astana, December 11, 2016.

The given review of the Canadian population is quite impressive and shows that Daniyar was exposed to self-expression values such as tolerance, gender and ethnic equality, respecting human rights and freedoms, participation in public politics and being a responsible citizen of the government (Inglehart and Welzel 2005, 54).

The interviews above show that both Western society and Western education contains self-expression values that young people from a foreign non-democratic state can notice. However, do these values have the power to change them? The answers to the following inquiry can be an indicator of a change in values: *If you had a chance to make substantial changes in the governmental structure of your country what would you probably do? Would it be connected to the practices you have noticed in your country of study?*

“I would have changed the system in place. The current political system is hard-wired, where officials are unable to take actions even if they want. But I hope there would be more open-minded people to undertake the changes. An area that requires modification is socioeconomic policy. The country lacks skilled economists that can design really sound solutions to improve the current situation. Moreover, there are no measurement indicators. Transparency is very low. We cannot measure the success/failure of politicians. For instance, in states (the US) there are measurable problems that politicians usually use for their campaigns. Thus, if a person is elected, the determinant of the success of his tenure in office will be whether those issues are resolved.”²⁷

Anuar’s rhetoric reflects Kazakhstan’s modernization program named “100 Steps”. The policy contains passages about the importance the building more transparent and accountable government (KazInform 2015).

Another interviewer reports:

I have worked for the government and I know that there are a lot of problems: corruption, daunting bureaucracy, sham elections, not well-designed policies (e.g. “100 Steps”). Also, I am interested in sustainable development and the implementation of the green energy policy in our country. However, currently, large part of our population is economically insecure. Therefore, it is early and unreasonable to talk about the next level of development, when there are still people

²⁷ Interview with a graduate of Business Management by Ainur Baimuratova, Astana. February 26, 2017

in Kazakhstan living below the poverty line. Simply put, there will not be any commitment to these policies until they are hungry and cold.”²⁸

This passage coincides with the theory by Inglehart and Welzel that my research is based on. As it was mentioned before, the theory argued that when the nation steps into the next level of economic development, and money is no longer basic priority, people make an effort to improve the ecological situation, respect for human rights and equality (Welzel and Inglehart 2008, 192–132). Consequently, the answer of a Western graduate seems to fit this “revisited” modernization theory.

I would first eliminate ghost or ineffective people who are indifferent to other people’s lives and do not bother themselves thinking about the proper operation of the system. I would hire competent ones and probably increase their salaries. A system would not work until there is no incentive for people to do so. Next, I will carry out information campaigns. To ensure that the system is coordinated and the complaints of ordinary people are addressed properly. Besides, there should be clear goals and a merit-based recruitment for government posts.²⁹

This answer also contains the message of the “third modernization” presented by the government of Kazakhstan. Increasing the quality of human capital through knowledge and meritocracy are key themes of “100 Steps” program (Rustem 2015).

Modification of the system through the management of human capital was also mentioned by Aigul, a law student from France. “I would like to start with the young generation. Put tiny seeds in their heads, teaching that knowing your rights along with responsibilities is crucial. I think educating children properly is the most important thing. However, I would also like to completely change the current establishment.”³⁰

In addition to this, a graduate of an Austrian university, Kamshat, focuses on transparency problems.

²⁸ Interview with a graduate of Petroleum Engineering by Ainur Baimuratova, Astana, December 11, 2016.

²⁹ Interview with a graduate of Journalism by Ainur Baimuratova, Astana, February 26, 2017.

³⁰ Interview with a graduate of International Law by Ainur Baimuratova, Astana, February 1, 2017.

I think building a transparent government is necessary. People have to be aware of what is happening, they should have access to official statistics. A more accountable government will reduce corruption, ensure that wrongdoers will be identified and punished. In addition, I would like to see more empowered people that can affect public policy.³¹

On the whole, interviews reveal that young people of Kazakhstan, who obtained degrees from Western democratic countries, were exposed to post-materialist norms both on-campus and outside of the universities. The university policy of academic freedom and integrity developed individualism and responsibility for autonomous decision-making. Moreover, interviewees admit that student-teacher relationship is different from the interactions between these groups in Kazakhstani universities. In the West, professors are more open to debate and do not mind, but encourage, when students present ideas different from their arguments. These factors introduced young individuals to basics of self-expression norms such as independent and critical thinking as well as freedom of expression. In addition, observing political behavior and social norms of Western people, along with the degree of relationship between citizens and state (Western democracy) influenced their comprehension of participation in public politics, freedom of expression, and genuine democracy.

Most of the graduates of Western universities wish to see more accountable, transparent government, ruled by educated people that do not occupy posts but produce changes within the state's political system. These views are concurrent with the strategic plan outlined by the President, which is called “the third modernization” or “100 Concrete Steps”. Since their policies are not aimed at boosting the national economy, creating more jobs, but towards empowering ordinary people and establishing the basis for democratic institutions, it might be plausible to argue that knowledge and norms acquired during the years spent in the West positively affected the young people of Kazakhstan and endowed them with self-expression values. Therefore, the benefits of “state-sponsored” modernization in the form of

³¹ Interview with a graduate of Pedagogy by Ainur Baimuratova, Astana, January 12, 2017.

Western-oriented education arguably affect the value systems of younger generation and increase the chances for regime change through individual impact.

Conclusion: State-led Modernization through Western Education

Modernization theory links the benefits of economic development with the probability of sociopolitical changes that might occur in a state. Since the 1960s there has been continuous debate discussing whether democratization is the subject of some “structural” causes or other variables similar to prior established democratic institutions. This research project also contributes to the vast body of literature on modernization theory. In particular, I aimed to apply the “modernization through cultural change” theory developed by Inglehart and Welzel (2005) to the case study of Kazakhstan.

Kazakhstan is a “limited multiparty” authoritarian state as defined by Linz (2000, 159). Although governed by authoritarian traditions, the government often initiates programs as “Kazakhstan-2030” or “100 Concrete Steps” to modernize the economy (Rustem 2015) improve the education system, unite a multinational population, and develop the business sector. However, can these socioeconomic goals lead to political changes? Will economic modernization create a change in the regime as was predicted by Lipset and others? This paper is focused on answering the related questions: Can the benefits of modernization produce individual level changes? Will Western-oriented education alter the value systems of young people?

In order to address the latter inquiry, I created three hypotheses connecting education to self-expression values. I argue that such post-materialist norms can be attained 1) as a person spends more time studying in a Western university and 2) as an individual takes more social science classes. These propositions were tested through an analysis of survey results conducted with 755 students of the Western, non-Western and Hybrid university. The analysis of data gathered through field research reveals that there is strong evidence supporting a positive relationship between additional years of schooling and higher self-expression values. Furthermore, regression analysis of my survey data found some empirical

support that the effect of additional years of education is stronger for respondents studying at Nazarbayev University. More substantively speaking, an average NU student in his/her last year of obtaining bachelor degree has higher self-expression values (close to 5)³², compared to a respondent, who just started his journey in this Western-style institution (about 4). Despite the high uncertainty of coefficient estimates, there is still some evidence in support of my original hypothesis.

On the other hand, a test of the second hypothesis did not reveal any significant results to argue that being a social science major can have a great influence on self-expression norms. These findings lead to a conclusion that there are factors, other than specific courses, that make people internalize liberal values. The qualitative analysis demonstrates that these elements are the norms such as freedom, autonomy, independent-thinking, tolerance, and freedom of expression present in the academic and social environment of students studying abroad.

To support the survey findings and learn about the experience of Kazakhstani youth, who studied abroad, I conducted interviews with 11 graduates of Western universities. The interviewees recognized that they were exposed to self-expression values both inside and outside of the university. The on-campus factors included Western universities' academic policies as well as the nature of student-professor interactions. On the other hand, Western society, in general, gave a number of examples where liberal values were especially emphasized. The graduates report witnessing protests and demonstrations, freedom of speech in action and the participatory behavior of Western civil society. More importantly, there was no stark contrast in the answers of engineering and social science majors, which again rejects the second hypothesis presented in this research.

³² These scores are derived from composite index *Value* that was generated by summing six indicators based on my survey questions. This variable has a range between 0 and 6. Higher scores are attributable to self-expression values [4;6], while lower ones are for survival norms [0;3].

Overall, the interview respondents recognize a huge gap between Kazakhstan and their state of study in the areas of education system, civil society, and public politics. They mostly propose building a more transparent, accountable government and empowering people through education policies that coincide with the points presented in the “state-sponsored” modernization program “100 Concrete Steps”. These suggestions might imply that graduates of Western universities indeed recognized the difference in the political system, education, and civil society of Kazakhstan and a Western country. Moreover, starkly different norms embedded into their academic and social life made them willing to see a similar system in their home country. Both qualitative and statistical data reveal that “modernization through cultural shift” proposed by Inglehart and Welzel (2005) works for the case of Kazakhstan. The benefits of state-initiated modernization in the form of Western education develop more articulate civil society possessing self-expression values and open to democratic changes.

This finding can have two possible implications. On the one hand, if the state’s goals outlined in “100 Steps” are genuine and current leaders of Kazakhstan indeed want to see more transparent and accountable political system as well as enhanced human capital, then it is more plausible for the government to relax its tight control over the activities of local universities. The findings suggest that the more autonomous a university is the more young people equipped with self-expression values it can produce. If Kazakhstani universities are not supervised by Ministry of Education, they might focus on increasing the quality of knowledge they supply, and the introduction of academic freedom into their official policy. This, in turn, can lead to the development of more skilled and independent young people possessing values capable of implementing state policies envisioned in “100 Steps”.

On the other hand, the reality suggests that political situation in Kazakhstan is still far from welcoming democracy. Election results are still dubious, corruption is omnipresent (Sullivan 2017, 3), public protests are not tolerated, and the opposition is nonexistent.

Therefore, it is more likely that growing number of sophisticated youth with liberal aspirations demanding democratic changes can threaten the elites of an authoritarian Kazakhstan. In order to sustain the entrenched regime, the elites might use the strategy of limiting the supply of “coordination goods” (Bueno de Mesquita and Downs 2005). Bueno de Mesquita and Downs (2005) argue that proficient autocratic leaders can both enjoy the benefits of economic growth and reduce the chances for democratization of the regime through banning free media, limiting access to higher education, and refusing to respect human rights. These actions allow non-democratic governments to preclude the coordination of educated and equipped opposition groups that might appear as a result of the increased benefits of economic growth (Bueno de Mesquita and Downs 2005, 82–83). Thus, if I apply this theory to Kazakhstan, it is clear that by cutting down the budget of Nazarbayev University and other channels of Western education in Kazakhstan, an authoritarian leader (or leaders) would attempt to thwart liberalization of the regime that the “third modernization” could possibly bring.

There are several methodological limitations in this study. Particularly, the measurement of the variables and the sampling method might have affected the final results. Therefore, further research may focus on refining my survey questions, collecting a more random sample and including other universities (for instance, Kazakh Institute of Management Economics and Strategic Research). Moreover, the longitudinal analysis capturing the values of students as they turn from freshmen to seniors would be particularly interesting. In addition, the survey and interview answers might suffer from a social desirability bias as there are several questions related to one’s position concerning gender equality or civic activism.³³

³³ For more details on survey questions, please see Appendix part of the research.

Overall, my research provides a contribution to the immense body of literature dedicated to modernization theory. Most of the existing academic works that study the link between education and democratization employ large-N statistical analysis to support this hypothesis. On the other hand, this project utilized both qualitative and quantitative methods and focused on a single authoritarian state – Kazakhstan. Thus, apart from statistical evidence, my research also presents a narrative of people who internalized liberal values through Western education.

Appendix

Survey Questions

1. Could you please write down your age?

1. _____.
2. I refuse.

2. Could you please select your gender?

1. Male.
2. Female.
3. I refuse.

3. Could you please select your University?

1. Nazarbayev University.
2. Eurasian National University.
3. Kazakh Agro Technical University.

4. Could you please select the answer which most coincides with your school/department?

1. School of Social Sciences and Humanities/ Department of Social Sciences/ Economics Department.
2. School of Science and Technology/ Department of Natural Sciences/Department of Computer Science and Professional Education.
3. School of Engineering/ Department of Physics and Technology/Technology Department.

5. Please select the answer that best applies to you. Have you ever applied to Nazarbayev University for enrollment as an undergraduate student?

1. I have and I am currently studying at NU.
2. I have, but I went to Eurasia National University instead.
3. I have, but I went to Kazakh Agro Technical University instead.
4. I have never applied to NU.
5. Hard to say.
6. I refuse.

6. Could you please indicate how often do you travel to the West?

1. Very often (more than once per year).
2. Often (approximately once per year).
3. Not so often (approximately once every few years).
4. I have never travelled to the West.
5. Hard to say.
6. I refuse.

7. How often do you view Western media outlets?

1. I very often view Western media outlets.
2. I often view Western media outlets.
3. Not so often.
4. I never view Western media outlets.
5. Hard to say.
6. I refuse.

8. The modern world is full of challenges requiring public attention and effective solutions. In your opinion, which of the following is the most serious and compelling? (please select just one answer):

1. Global economic crisis.
2. Violation of human rights.
3. Terrorism.
4. Gender discrimination.
5. Environmental concerns.
6. Hard to say.
7. I refuse to answer.

9. Some people believe that capitalism is good for the development of the national economy. For instance, there can be such arguments: it brings competitiveness, which yields products with better quality and affordable prices and increases the overall well-being of society. What is your opinion regarding this statement?

1. Strongly agree.
2. Agree.
3. I do not have an opinion.
4. Disagree.
5. Strongly disagree.
6. Hard to say.
7. I refuse to answer.

10. Some people believe that it is acceptable to participate in a peaceful demonstration while others do not. What is your opinion regarding this issue? Do you think that you would participate in a peaceful demonstration if you found the issue at stake very important for you, your society and your country?

1. I would certainly participate in a peaceful demonstration if I found the issue at stake important for the future of my country.
2. I might participate in a peaceful demonstration if I found the issue at stake important for the future of my country.
3. I probably would not participate in a peaceful demonstration, even if I found the issue at stake important for the future of my country.
4. I would not participate in a peaceful demonstration, even if I found the issue at stake important for the future of my country.
5. Hard to say.

6. I refuse to answer.

**11. What do you think is the most essential characteristic of a democratic state?
Please select just one answer from the statements below:**

1. People receive social services from the government.
2. Multiple political parties.
3. Active civil society.
4. People can choose their rulers in free and fair elections.
5. Governmental respect for human rights.
6. Rule of law.
7. Hard to say.
8. I refuse to answer.

12. Some people do not like to participate in elections, because they do not believe in the fairness of electoral outcomes. What about you? Do you think that your vote during Presidential/Parliament elections influences the final results?

1. I think my vote during Presidential/Parliament elections is very influential.
2. I think my vote during Presidential/Parliament elections is influential.
3. I think my vote during Presidential/Parliament elections is not so influential.
4. I think that voting in elections has no purpose whatsoever.
5. Hard to say.
6. I refuse to answer.

13. Women are believed to be in the minority in some professional areas compared to men. What do you think about women in politics? What is your opinion regarding this issue?

1. I think women should be involved in politics and can govern just as well as men.
2. I think women should be involved in politics, but I do not think that they can govern just as well as men.
3. I think women should not be involved in politics, but I think that they can govern just as well as men.
4. I think women should not be involved in politics and I do not think that they can govern just as well as men.
5. Hard to say.
6. I refuse to answer.

Interview Questions

1. Could you please tell me what was your major during your studies? What courses did you take? Was there any specific emphasis on particular subjects or approaches (e.g. critical thinking, more independent work)? Could you tell me more about the benefits and drawbacks of the specific characteristics of your courses?
2. Did these courses change your perception about the situation happening in your home country? What were you thinking when you were reading news about Kazakhstan? Could you please provide a particular example? What sources of information did you usually use (English, Russian, Kazakh, all)? Why?
3. Did your studies affect your overall perceptions about politics? Did you become more interested in foreign affairs? In what ways? Could you please give a particular example?
4. What basic differences did you notice between Kazakhstani society and other societies? What can you say about the general social attitude of your country of study toward politics?
5. Would you say that people in your state of stay participated more actively in the political life of their country? If so, in what ways? Do you want local people to follow the same fashion?
6. If you had a chance to make substantial changes within the governmental structure of your country what would you probably do? Would it be connected to the practices you have noticed in your country of study?
7. Do you see yourself living in Kazakhstan in 10 years? If yes, why? If not, could you tell me where you would like to live?

Table 9. Descriptive Statistics of Variables

Variable	Mean	St. deviation	Min	Max	Number of Observations
Years of education	2.11	1.14	1	4	719
World problems	0.47	0.49	0	1	721
Capitalism	0.48	0.5	0	1	686
Demonstrations	0.6	0.48	0	1	676
Democratic state	0.8	0.39	0	1	716
Elections	0.51	0.49	0	1	697
Women in politics	0.52	0.49	0	1	703
Media	0.43	0.49	0	1	707
Travelling	0.07	0.26	0	1	714
Self-expression	0.56	0.49	0	1	601
Value	3.62	1.32	0	6	602

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